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COLBERT AND A CENTURY OF  
FRENCH MERCANTILISM

*IN TWO VOLUMES*



LOUIS XIV AND COLBERT VISIT THE GOBELINS, 1667  
DETAIL OF A GOBELINS TAPESTRY (1673-1679)  
DESIGNED BY LE BRUN. COLBERT IS AT THE LEFT,  
LE BRUN AT THE RIGHT OF THE ROYAL PARTY.

COLBERT  
AND A CENTURY OF  
FRENCH  
MERCANTILISM

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COLBERT AND A CENTURY OF  
FRENCH MERCANTILISM





# IX

## COMPANIES AND COLONIES

### I. THE WEST INDIA COMPANY

COLBERT formed the French West India Company in 1664, the same year in which the East India Company was founded. The purposes of the two organizations were not dissimilar. In 1663 the French were in titular possession of fourteen islands in the West Indies, of which the most important were Saint Christopher, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. These islands were an inheritance from colonial activity that dated back to the time of Richelieu. But from them France derived but little benefit. As S. L. Mims, the author of the most authoritative work on the subject, puts it, "Politically these fourteen islands were under the rule of French proprietors, and were theoretically in the possession of the French king, but industrially and commercially they were in the possession of the Dutch."<sup>1</sup>

In a discourse on manufactures, drawn up in 1663 apparently to clarify his own ideas, Colbert discussed the West India trade at some length. Starting from the fact that French linen manufacturing might be aided by opening up markets in the New World, he branched out into other aspects of the problem. The Dutch, he declared, brought to France each year from the West Indies sugar to the value of 2,000,000 *livres*, and cotton, tobacco, indigo, and other products to the value of 1,000,000 *livres*. These goods they secured in the islands by taking thither Negro slaves from Guinea, salt meat from Muscovy and Ireland, and goods of various sorts from Holland. They bought the goods in Muscovy and Ireland in exchange for West India products and French wines and brandies, getting in addition salt meat, wood, and hemp for use in Holland. For all this trade they used some 200 ships, with crews totaling 6,000 men.

Thus it seemed clear to Colbert that if Louis XIV founded a West India Company strong enough to take from the Dutch the West Indies trade, France would have 200 more ships in her ports; employment

<sup>1</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 50-51.

would be given to 6,000 more Frenchmen; new markets would be gained for French products; the Dutch would be forced to bring the French 3,000,000 *livres* in cash; and the French would be stimulated to undertake commerce to northern Europe. "Thus the king will become powerful on the sea, and powerful in wealth," concluded Colbert.<sup>2</sup>

A year earlier Formont, a Parisian banker, had pointed out the desirability of excluding the Dutch from the trade with the West Indies and of monopolizing that commerce for the benefit of the French. During 1662 and 1663 Colbert gathered information on the French islands. He heard that after the death of Du Parquet, in 1658, the administration on Martinique had become so corrupt that many planters were leaving the island. The facts as to the Dutch monopoly of the trade of the French West Indies were confirmed. The situation seemed to demand drastic action. In 1663 Colbert secured the appointment of Alexandre Prouville de Tracy, an able, loyal soldier sixty years of age, as Lieutenant-general of all the French possessions in America. Tracy sailed for the West Indies in February, 1664. Hard working, so incorruptible that he ate salt meat rather than accept fresh meat as a present, Tracy labored for about a year in the islands before going on to Canada. He established order, enforced the laws, and won high praise from Colbert.<sup>3</sup>

*Organization of the company.*—Meanwhile, in France, Colbert was busy laying the foundations for the West India Company. He planned to unite, under one monopolistic organization, trade with West Africa, South America, the West Indies, and Canada. But there existed French companies with rights and privileges in this commerce which had to be extinguished, not to mention those of the individual proprietors of the islands. On April 17, 1664, a royal decree ordered the proprietors of the West Indian islands to present to the king the titles by which they claimed ownership. It declared that since the company had turned over the colonies to private persons, little progress had been made and their commerce had fallen into the hands of foreigners. The king was therefore determined to take back title to the islands. Another decree, of May 8, reënforced the provisions of the earlier one. The proprietors refused to accede to the decrees. But Colbert went ahead with his plans. The edict establishing the company was issued on May 28, and reg-

<sup>2</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cclviii–cclix; cf. cclxix.

<sup>3</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 56 ff.

istered by the *Chambre des comptes* and the *Parlement* of Paris in July, despite all protests. In the ensuing months the proprietors of the islands were bought out, one by one. By 1665 all had ceded their claims save Houel, part owner of Guadeloupe, who was thereafter merely ignored.<sup>4</sup>

In November, 1664, Colbert likewise forced the Norman merchants of the *Compagnie du Cap-Vert et Sénégal*, who had a trading post at Fort Saint-Louis on the West Coast of Africa, to relinquish their rights in it and their trade for 150,000 *livres*. A year earlier the almost-defunct *Compagnie de la Nouvelle France* had been persuaded to cede all its rights and privileges in Canada to the king, who had immediately sent Louis Gaudais Dupont thither to take over the colony for the crown and to establish there a royal government. The Cayenne Company, which was engaged in trying to start a colony in South America, was absorbed into the new West India Company by a royal decree of May 30, 1664.<sup>5</sup>

Two days earlier had been issued the edict establishing the West India Company. In the preamble the king stated that now that he had secured peace for his country, he was turning his attention to the re-establishment of commerce. To stimulate trade, he was forming powerful companies. The old companies for Canada and the West Indies, though they had done something for the settlement and clearing of the land, had failed to build up commerce. So the king was taking over these colonies, to give them to a new company which was to carry on the work.

The edict proceeded to establish the company and to turn over to it all French possessions in America. By forty-two articles the form and privileges of the company were then laid down. In general it was to be much like its sister company for the East Indies, which was being organized at the same time. The more important articles may be summarized thus:<sup>6</sup>

1. The company was to be called *La Compagnie des Indes Occidentales*. As the conversion of the natives was to be one of its chief objects, it was to maintain ecclesiastics and churches in the lands under its control.

<sup>4</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 73-74; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 98-100.

<sup>5</sup> Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, p. 224; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 361; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>6</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 100-14; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 35.

2. Participation in the company would not impair the privileged status of any individual. Foreigners might join it.

3. The minimum subscription, for the first four months at least, was to be 3,000 *livres*.

4. Those who invested from 10,000 to 20,000 *livres*, were to be entitled to take part in the general assemblies of the company. Those who invested 20,000 *livres* or more were, in turn, to be directors, and were automatically to be granted the status of bourgeois in the cities in which they resided.

5. Foreigners in France, who invested 20,000 *livres* or more, were to be reputed French subjects as long as they remained in France and retained their investment in the company.

6. Government officials who invested 20,000 *livres* or more were not to be held to reside in the places where their duties were exercised.

8. A Chamber of Direction, of nine directors-general, was to be established in Paris. The term of office was to be three years. Provincial chambers of direction, composed entirely of merchants, might be set up.

11. Property of the company and shares of stockholders were not to be seized by the government under any pretext. Even shares belonging to foreigners of a country with which the king was at war were to be immune from seizure.

15. A monopoly for forty years of all trade to the West Indies, America, and the West Coast of Africa was granted to the company.

16. A royal bounty of 30 *livres* per ton on all goods sent from France to the West Indies, and of 40 *livres* a ton on all goods sent from the West Indies to France, was to be paid to the company.

18. Goods imported into France by the company and then reexported were to pay no export duties. Sugar refined in France by the company was to pay no export duties.

19. Munitions, provisions, and naval stores imported from abroad by the company, for its own use, were to pay no import duties.

20-21. All lands and forts then in the possession of the French in the indicated areas, and all territory conquered by the company in the future were granted to the company in full lordship. The king reserved only faith and homage for himself and a gold crown weighing thirty *marcs* for each of his successors on his accession.

25. The company was to have full rights over all rivers, harbors, and mines in its lands. On the mines it was not to be held to pay any royal dues.

27. The king was to appoint governors for the company's lands, on the nomination of the company.

28. The company was to have the right to own and equip warships.

30. The company was allowed to negotiate and make alliances, in the name of the king, with native rulers.

33. The company was to have the right to establish courts and *conseils souverains* wherever necessary. The king was to appoint the judges and members of the *conseils*, upon nomination by the company.

34. The laws of France and the Custom of Paris were to hold good in the company's lands.

35. Children born in the colonies, and converted savages there, were to be reputed native-born French subjects. Any artisan plying his trade for ten years in the colonies could enjoy the status of a master in any city in France upon his return there.

42. The king was to furnish, as a four-to-eight-year loan without interest, one tenth of all the capital needed by the company. If the company suffered any losses in its first years, they were to fall upon the sums lent by the king.

Two days after the edict was issued, a supplementary decree modified article 16. Instead of bounties, the company was to receive a remission of one-half of all import or export duties on goods sent out or brought in by it.

Once the West India Company was founded, the books were opened for subscriptions to its stock. No such drive to sell stock was inaugurated for it as was launched for the East India Company. Indeed the fact that subscriptions were being so imperiously solicited for the East India Company must have made it much harder for the West India Company to secure funds. The records show that on June 2, four days after the issuance of the edict founding it, the West India Company boasted 23 stockholders, who were credited with subscriptions totaling 520,000 *livres*. But most if not all of these seem to have represented investments in the Cayenne Company, which had been transferred to the books of the new organization. On June 10 Bidaud, one of the directors, wrote to Colbert, pleading in behalf of the company for some funds from the royal treasury.

On June 3 a subscription of 10,000 *livres* was entered on the books, and on August 18 another for 15,000 *livres*. From then until September 7, no more came in. In September, 9 more subscriptions, totaling 123,000 *livres*, were entered. October brought in 10, which attained the same total. In November and December, 18 more, totaling 192,000 *livres*, were recorded. Thus by the end of the year the company had secured a nominal capital of 983,000 *livres*. But of this it is probable that 520,000 *livres* was in the assets of the Cayenne company and not in cash. In 1665 1,604,360 *livres* was subscribed to the company, of which 1,387,000 *livres* came from the king and 30,000 *livres* from the Colbert himself. The years 1666 and 1667 brought in 1,846,440 *livres*, of which the king gave 1,135,000 *livres*. In 1668 the king put in 100,000 *livres*, and other individuals 44,000 *livres*. In 1669 the king gave the company

404,545 *livres*, and 540,000 *livres* was secured from the existing stockholders.

Thus between 1664 and 1669 the company obtained as contributions toward its capital 5,522,345 *livres*. Of this total the king supplied some 54 percent, or 3,026,545 *livres*. The rest came largely from government officials, not from merchants. Of 39 of those entered on the stockbooks in 1664 whose status could be ascertained, 33 were officials, 6 were merchants. Of the subscriptions of 1666 and 1667, all but 72,500 *livres* came from officials or tax farmers. The large proportion of officials among the stockholders may be accounted for in a number of ways. First, it was easiest for Colbert to bring pressure on those persons directly dependent on his favor. Second, the articles of the company, as a special attraction for officials, exempted those who subscribed 20,000 *livres* from the operation of the royal declaration of December, 1663, which had required all officials to reside in the place where their functions were supposed to be performed. In a day when it was quite customary to perform one's duties through a hired substitute, this provision was of some importance. Third, special efforts were made to attract officials as subscribers. For instance, a royal declaration of August 27, 1664, permitted judicial officials, even if stockholders in the West India Company, to sit on cases in which the company was a party.

In any event, the company was rather a government organization, financed largely by the king and by royal officials and guided by Colbert, than a truly mercantile enterprise financed and directed by merchants. One special method by which Colbert secured money for the company also deserves mention. In 1666 he ordered that 1,084,000 *livres* in fines, levied by the Chamber of Justice on certain financiers, be paid over by them to the company as subscriptions to its stock. Though immediately the operation netted it only 245,400 *livres*, in the end such fines seem to have brought in large sums to the company. As with the East India Company, Colbert dreamed of getting foreign aid. He even drew up a *mémoire* to show how advantageous it would be for German and Scandinavian rulers to support the French West India Company.<sup>7</sup>

In other ways than financial, Colbert extended government aid to the new company. A few examples will serve. A decree of February 12,

<sup>7</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 114-15, 122-24; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 75-81, 144-45, 178; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 429-32.

1665, freed from all city and local taxes provisions and livestock destined for the West Indies. Another decree, of March 10, 1665, exempted goods of the West India Company from tolls on the Seine and the Loire. A decree of September 15, 1665, fixed the import duty on sugar, of whatever grade, from the French islands at 4 *livres* per hundredweight, while foreign sugars were taxed at rates which varied from 6 *livres* to 22 *livres*, 10 *sous* per hundredweight, according to the quality of the sugar. In May, 1666, the duty on sugar from the islands was reduced still further, to 2 *livres* per hundredweight.<sup>8</sup>

*The first three years.*—The foundation of the West India Company, thus financed and supported by the government, caused considerable stir in Holland. The Dutch saw in it even more cause for apprehension than in the French East India Company, since the French could exclude competitors from the islands which they controlled, while in the East Indies the French had not even a foothold. Whether because they feared they would be shut out from the islands, or because of the approaching war with England, or because of a desire to show how necessary they were to the French colonists, the Dutch in 1664 sent but few ships to the French West Indies. Some of their fears, at least, were justified, for on September 30, 1664, Colbert secured the issuance of a royal decree excluding Dutch vessels from the French islands on the ostensible grounds that the plague was raging at Amsterdam. The hostility of the Dutch to the new company is well illustrated by an incident which occurred at the end of 1664. On Christmas day one of Colbert's agents at Amsterdam wrote him:

One of the ships that I equipped for the company of the West wished to go out of Tessel about three weeks ago, and since it did not yet have permission for that, three vessels of the Estates fired ten or twelve volleys of cannon balls at it to make it return, as it did, to the place where it had fitted out.<sup>9</sup>

With the Dutch abstaining from the trade to the West Indies, it became essential that the French company send thither food and supplies, for the islands were not by any means self-supporting. As early as June 28, 1664, Bechameil, a director of the company who acted as an intermediary between it and Colbert, wrote to the minister to tell him

<sup>8</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 134, 137, 152-53; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decree of September 15, 1665.

<sup>9</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 83-85; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 126, fols. 617-18.



that cargoes for two ships were being purchased. But it was not until December that the first ships sailed. Three were sent to the West Indies, one to Cayenne. The three ships reached Martinique in February, 1665. At their arrival, laden with food and goods, the colonists were delighted. But the distribution of the supplies was handled in a most disorderly fashion. Credit was given to the most insolvent. The clerks, whom there had been great difficulty in recruiting, proved inefficient. Many of the substantial planters were alienated by the obvious incompetence displayed by the company's servants. In the end, too, there was not enough food. If Tracy had not been there to enforce order, a rebellion against the company might well have broken out. As it was, there was much grumbling and some sporadic disorders.

On February 19, 1665, Tracy, with an elaborate ceremony on Martinique, turned the islands over to the company. The ceremony was repeated on the other islands. But the colonists showed little enthusiasm for the company, and those on Tortuga and Santo Domingo long refused to recognize its authority. On March 17, 1665, Tracy issued a series of regulations to govern the relationships between the company and the colonists, to encourage the development of new sugar plantations, and the introduction of "useful manufactures."<sup>10</sup>

In France the directors were busy organizing the company. Local boards of directors were chosen at Rouen and La Rochelle. Agents were established in half a dozen Atlantic and Channel ports. Ships were purchased and others were built, so that by the end of 1665 one director claimed that the company had in its possession more than fifty vessels. A number of ships were sent to the island in 1665. Eight seem to have sailed in January alone. But the expenses of the company were running high, and its income was as yet minute. To aid it Colbert turned over to it the proceeds of a special tax levied at Rouen on sugar and wax, and authorized it in February, 1665, to borrow 600,000 *livres* from the farmers of the *aides*. Thus succored, the company was able to send out several large ships in March, 1665.

But supplies were running low in the islands. There was much discontent because the prices charged by the company for its goods were much higher than those which the Dutch had charged. The women complained because no shoes had been sent, and stirred up their menfolk

<sup>10</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 138-44; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 85-94, 107-21; Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, pp. 406 ff.

to protest. The ships of the company were not numerous enough to handle the crops raised by the islanders. In the spring of 1665 an uprising occurred on Martinique. Crowds gathered and shouted "Long live the Dutch!" Petitions were presented to de Clodoré, governor of the island. The tobacco "stringers" marched in a body to present their complaints to that official. But without much difficulty, the protesting colonists were pacified. Colbert wrote to de Clodoré to congratulate him on suppressing the troubles. He urged him to work to increase the population and to take care of each colonist "like a good father of a family."

Apparently realizing the seriousness of the situation, Colbert secured funds for the company from the royal treasury, to the extent of nearly 500,000 *livres* between March and July, 1665. In May, 11 ships were sent out by the company from La Rochelle and Saint-Malo. But these steps were not enough to quiet the colonists, for a new grievance had arisen. De Tracy, in his regulations, had provided that the company was to transport island products to France for the colonists at the rate of 7 *livres* per hundredweight. Of this charge 5 *livres* was for freight and 2 *livres* for import duty. But instead of charging the half-rate of 2 *livres* as the duty on such goods, the tax farmers insisted on the full rate of 4 *livres* and were upheld by royal decrees in June and November, 1665. The company, therefore, charged 9 *livres* per hundredweight instead of 7 *livres*. Outraged, the planters rose in rebellion in three separate districts of Martinique. De Clodoré was able to put down the troubles only by using troops against the rebels and by arresting the leaders.<sup>11</sup>

The company seems to have sent out a number of ships in the summer of 1665. But returns were slow, and the company was kept afloat only by further advances from the royal treasury, which reached the figure of 900,000 *livres* between July and the end of the year. By the beginning of 1666 the company had in its possession some 50 or 60 ships. It had sent to the islands goods worth 1,500,000 *livres*, to Canada goods worth one-tenth that amount, and to Senegal goods valued at 200,000 *livres*. In addition, it had in its warehouses in France goods worth 600,000 *livres*. It had taken possession of all the lands granted to it. It had sent an agent to Senegal. It was endeavoring to develop the Guinea slave trade, through a man named Carolof, a naturalized German. But as late as May, 1666, the company had probably sent out to the islands not more than 40 ships. Though this was the best showing

<sup>11</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 95-107; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 397.

any French commercial company had ever made, it scarcely replaced the activity of the Dutch, who had sent to the French West Indies more than 100 ships a year.<sup>12</sup>

Instead of being devoted to the building up of the West India commerce, the next two years, 1666 and 1667, were spent in protecting the islands. For in January, 1666, war broke out between France and England. Even earlier, as war approached, the English had inflicted a severe loss on the company by capturing five of its ships. The company had hoped to keep the islands neutral, but it was soon clear that this was impossible. De Clodoré, on Martinique, organized their defense, and a shortage of munitions was relieved somewhat when a Dutch ship brought 900 pounds of powder to Guadeloupe. The natural focus for the conflict in the islands was Saint Christopher, which was held jointly by the English and the French. In the spring of 1666 the English at that island were reënforced by Captain Morgan and his buccaneers from Jamaica. But in April the French defeated the English, pirates and all, and proceeded to conquer the island, forcing those of the English settlers who wished to remain on it to take an oath of allegiance to France.

In May, 1666, the company sent out to the islands a large fleet with troops, munitions, and supplies, under the command of de la Barre. Part of the fleet was driven back by a storm. Most of it kept on to Cayenne, which interested de la Barre more than the islands. But de la Barre himself was forced by head winds to put in at Martinique. On that island a shortage of food and munitions had led in July to another rising, which de Clodoré had put down with some bloodshed. Some relief was afforded by the arrival in July and August of 4 company ships and three vessels belonging to the Dutch, who were now allied with the French against the English. But the situation was still serious. In France, after the arrival of the news of the victory on Saint Christopher, it had been decided to protect the islands vigorously. A squadron of 5 warships with 400 soldiers, accompanied by some company vessels, sailed from La Rochelle in July and reached Martinique on September 15, two weeks before de la Barre. The portion of de la Barre's fleet which had gone on to Cayenne discharged the greater part of its cargo there and came back to the islands in November. So by the end of the year there was a formidable concentration of ships in the French West Indies.

<sup>12</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 107-21.

Soon after his arrival de la Barre received a petition from the planters of Martinique that he reestablish Tracy's regulations as to freight, that he allow the Dutch to trade in the French islands, and that he permit all Frenchmen to trade thither freely. After conferring with de Clodoré, de la Barre agreed to permit all Frenchmen to trade with the islands if they paid the company 2½-percent import and export duties. Foreigners were likewise to be permitted to carry on commerce there, if they paid double those duties. The company directors in France had come to a similar conclusion. As a war measure, they decided to relax their monopoly of commerce in favor of both private French traders and the Dutch. But the duties they approved were just double those established by de la Barre, and they insisted that their rates, rather than his, were to be enforced.

At the end of 1666 and early in 1667 the French took the aggressive in the West Indies, and under de la Barre captured from the English the islands of Antigua and Montserrat. The arrival in April, 1667, of a strong English fleet, which fought an indecisive battle with the French naval forces, altered the situation. On June 29 the English ships launched against Martinique a series of attacks which continued until July 6. They were beaten off with great difficulty and succeeded in burning a number of French and Dutch vessels. Only a change of wind, which forced the English to retire, enabled de Clodoré to reorganize the French forces and prevent the disaster from becoming complete. On July 7 the English attacked again. Though they were beaten off, the French had to sink their own ships to prevent their capture. Martinique was saved, but the French had lost some twenty vessels, as well as the command of the sea. Trade became well-nigh impossible for the company. The situation was relieved when, on July 31 a peace treaty was signed between Holland and England. Meanwhile secret negotiations in March and April had led to an agreement between Charles II and Louis XIV. France was to restore to England the islands it had conquered in the West Indies, while England was to watch benevolently the invasion of the Spanish Netherlands by Louis XIV. The war had, however, resulted in severe losses for the French company. The directors estimated that it had cost the company 2,222,000 *livres* through the loss of ships, cargoes, and trade.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 110-11, 122-42; Lavissee, *Histoire de France*, VII (Part II), 284 ff.; *Cambridge Modern History*, V, Chapter II.

Despite royal aid in 1666 and 1667 and the assignment to it of certain fines levied by the Chamber of Justice, the French West India Company was in financial straits by the end of the latter year. Its deficit was then estimated at 1,639,800 *livres*, and many of its assets were of dubious value. It had still, according to the directors, 32 ships totaling 7,610 tons burden. Of these 14 were in the islands. But foreigners and French private traders had been readmitted to the West Indian trade. Even when, in November, 1667, Colbert advanced 713,000 *livres* from the royal treasury to the company and sent a royal naval squadron to the islands to support it, its prospects did not seem too bright. The people in the West Indies were convinced, early in 1668, that the company would be dissolved.

But Colbert was of a different mind, for in his instructions to the *sieur de la Robesnières de Treillebois*, who was put in command of the naval squadron sent out in November, 1667, he ordered him to exclude all foreigners from the French West Indies and to "force the inhabitants to submit voluntarily" to the rules and ordinances of the company. He was to show the English that the king was determined to protect the West Indian colonies. He was to visit the islands and to encourage the inhabitants to increase their commerce and agriculture. He was, further, to let them know that the king was determined to support the company, and to see that it treated the colonists fairly. Despite Colbert's orders on the exclusion of foreigners, the Dutch, taking advantage of the permission to trade with the islands, gained during the war, seem to have sent ships thither as late as July, 1668, and even thereafter.<sup>14</sup>

*Gradual abandonment of monopoly.*—From 1668 to 1670 Colbert was somewhat hesitant as to what policy to follow on the question of permitting private French traders to traffic with the West Indies. As late as February, 1670, he seems to have considered restoring to the company its full monopoly of West Indian commerce. But as early as 1668 he was encouraging private merchants to engage in the trade. A decree of September 10, 1668, regularized the war-time relaxation of the company's monopoly, and laid the basis for Colbert's gradually developing policy. The decree pointed out that the chief object of the West India Company was to wrest from foreigners the trade with the French islands. During the war, it had been necessary for the company to permit foreign ships to trade there, but many foreign ships had come with-

<sup>14</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 398-99; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 143-52, 182.

out permission, and had secured the bulk of the exports of the islands. As the king's chief desire was to keep the commerce of the West Indies in the hands of the French, it was therefore ordered that only French ships should be allowed to trade to the French islands. But they might be either those of the company or ships belonging to private merchants who had secured permission from the company to send them to the West Indies. All goods from the French Islands must be landed in France. But if they were reexported, no duties were to be paid.<sup>15</sup>

At first the private ships going to the West Indies under this decree were charged by the company a 6-livres tonnage tax for the outward voyage, and a 5-percent duty on all goods brought back to France. By a royal decree of December 9, 1669, the 6-livres-per-ton fee was abolished, to encourage private traders to go thither, and to prevent a rise in the price of food in the islands. By a later decree, of June 4, 1671, goods taken to the islands were freed of all export duties, and the 5 percent paid to the company on goods brought back to France was reduced to 3 percent.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile Colbert was gradually developing his policy on private trading to the West Indies. In June, 1669, a royal decree announced that to prevent foreign ships going to the West Indies under the pretense of being French vessels, the king alone would henceforth grant passports to those who wished to send ships thither. But the real object seems to have been different, since in the next month Colbert wrote to Colbert du Terron that he himself had taken charge of the issuing of passports, to prevent favoritism by the company. "I am a little contrary," he added, "to everything which may hinder commerce, which should be extremely free."

In August, 1669, Colbert wrote twice to de Baas, the Governor-general of the islands, telling him to treat the ships of private merchants just as well as those of the company. He had heard that de Baas was favoring the company, as against private traders. Such favoritism must be stopped, so as to attract more ships to the islands. In the same month Colbert wrote a letter to the municipal officials of the various seaport towns of France and to Colbert du Terron, in which he said

<sup>15</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 472-76; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 153 ff., 225 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 174-75; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 198.

<sup>16</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 225 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 187, 226-27.

that he had been informed that agents of the West India Company and royal officials in the islands had been making trouble for private merchants who went there. It was charged that they forced the inhabitants to sell their goods to the company, and made sure that company vessels received cargoes, in preference to private ones. The king, being anxious to aid private traders, declared Colbert, would give strict orders that they have complete freedom in their commerce with the islands. At about the same time Colbert directed Colbert de Terron to see that royal naval vessels refrained from engaging in any commercial activities, lest they interfere with the business of the company.<sup>17</sup>

Though Colbert seemed hesitant during the next year, his West Indian policies underwent still further development. In a *mémoire* drawn up for two directors of the company who were being sent to America to straighten out its affairs there, he told them that their watchwords should be "liberty, fidelity, or good faith, and being content with a small profit on each type of goods so as to increase it by quantity and large sales." They were to end the practice of fixing the price of goods, since that was merely avoiding a "lesser evil by a greater one." As long as the company was allowing private traders to go to the islands, the prices of goods would take care of themselves, if the merchants were allowed to dispose of their goods freely. It would be well, however, to force each ship to sell its cargo within one month, under penalty of confiscation. But when the monopoly of the company should be restored, prices could be held down only if the company, in good faith, tried to keep a large stock of goods on each island and sold them at public auctions. The company must further keep large stocks of goods ready for shipment from France, and it must study the consumption of goods in the islands so as to know when to send them and in what quantities.<sup>18</sup>

In this *mémoire* Colbert seems to have envisioned not only a long period when the company would be carrying on general trade with the islands, but also an actual restoration of its monopoly. Yet in April, 1670, he wrote in quite a different tone to de Baas. He remarked didactically, "Commerce being a result of the pure volition of men, it must necessarily be left free, if there is no inevitable necessity of limit-

<sup>17</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises*, I, 178-79; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 471, 483, 487; III<sup>2</sup>, 456-60; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 220-21; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 226 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 472-76.

ing it to a single company or a few individuals." He then went on to say that the company would have enough to do to keep the islands supplied with livestock and slaves, leaving the ordinary trade to private merchants. Such a policy would bring to the colonies an abundance of goods and would prevent profiteering by the company or its agents. De Baas was not to be surprised if the directors of the company sought to monopolize the commerce of the islands, for, declared Colbert:

They think only of their own interests and not of the general welfare of the State and of the islands. But for you and for me, who can raise ourselves above private interests to seek the general good, with which, in a brief time, that of the company will coincide, we should always support complete liberty of commerce.<sup>19</sup>

In June, 1670, Colbert wrote Pellissier, one of the directors of the company who had gone to the West Indies, telling him that any French ship provided with a royal passport was to have complete liberty to buy, sell, and trade in the islands. It might be wise, however, he added, to prevent the private merchants from sailing about seeking to sell their goods at the highest price or to create some monopoly. It would be a good idea to make a regulation that any ship might stay in a harbor for four days. If it remained longer than that, it should be held to sell its goods in that port within thirty days. Colbert urged Pellissier not to let de Baas know of the regulation sooner than necessary, since he would be sure to use it to impair the freedom of trade.

It was freedom that the islands needed, Colbert was sure, because merchants would pay more for good sugar than for bad, and planters with good sugar would demand more and better goods for it. Thus the quality of sugar would be improved, and prices kept down at the same time. "You will see in the course of time," declared Colbert, "that this reciprocal liberty will produce all the benefits and all the plenty that one could desire for these islands." He added that the company should bring over 2,000 slaves each year from Guinea and large quantities of livestock from France, as it had been resolved that it should concentrate on these two types of commerce.<sup>20</sup>

A month later Colbert wrote to de Baas. It was all right, he said, for the company to take a variety of goods to the islands, until there were sufficient private traders to supply all the needs of the colonists. But after that time, it was to devote its attention to bringing slaves

<sup>19</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 477-80.

<sup>20</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 483-87.



from Guinea, so that the services of the Dutch might be dispensed with. As to de Baas' report that the islanders wished either to have all commerce in the hands of the company or to have foreigners admitted to it, Colbert replied, "these are two extremes almost equally bad and prejudicial to the islands."<sup>21</sup>

In October Colbert reiterated his belief that freedom for private traders would be advantageous to the islands. In December he announced that he had issued orders that all ships sailing to the islands were to take out livestock, and that he hoped that this measure would secure an adequate supply of animals for the colonies. On the next to the last day of the year 1670, a decree provided for the registration of passports, at both ends of the voyage, by all vessels going to the French islands, to prevent ships sailing without passports, to prevent their stopping at foreign ports, and to secure for France the advantages of the private trade to the islands.<sup>22</sup>

Thus in 1669 and 1670 Colbert gradually gave up the idea of having all the trade to the West Indies carried on by a monopolistic company. The policy, begun in war-time in 1666, was regularized. The private trader was encouraged and supported against both the company and the royal officials. Some writers, led astray by Colbert's remarks on the "freedom of commerce" and anxious to give him credit for having understood the truths and beauties of *laissez faire*, have spoken of the change as a conversion of Colbert from a belief in monopolies to a belief in freedom in commerce. It is hard to judge of Colbert's motives in granting any monopoly to the company in the first place, for his correspondence on the colonies before 1669 has not been preserved to any considerable extent. But it is clear that he underwent no conversion. The East India Company retained its monopoly unmodified for a dozen years after 1669. The Company of the North and two Senegal companies were all formed by him during 1669, or thereafter. To all of them monopolies were granted.

In the West India trade, Colbert seems to have regarded both a monopolistic company and private traders as instruments of national policy, to be used in ousting the Dutch from the commerce with the French colonies. He was equally ready to employ either instrument, as circumstances seemed to demand. He hesitated, only because he was not

<sup>21</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 487-88.

<sup>22</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 495-97, 503-4; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 206-7.

sure which would be more effective under the given conditions. He created a monopolistic company, because it seemed to him best suited for his purposes. He opened the commerce to private traders five years later, because he felt that a centralized agency was no longer necessary. The truth of the matter probably lies in the fact that by 1669 Colbert felt that the Dutch ships had been largely excluded from the islands, and that the real problem was to get enough ships into the trade between France and the colonies to supply the needs of the colonists.<sup>23</sup>

While Colbert was gradually turning to private traders as the best means of keeping the commerce of the islands in the hands of the French, he did not abandon the company, by any means. During 1668 and 1669 he reorganized the company, in an effort to make it more efficient. Each member of the board of directors was given definite tasks and told that he must work on the company's affairs from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M. four days a week. De Baas was sent to the islands as Governor-general, with orders to coöperate with the company. The company was told to get rid of its inefficient and dishonest clerks in the West Indies and to confine itself largely to wholesale trade, that the merchants among the colonists might make some profits.

In January, 1669, Colbert decided that it would be wise to arouse new interest in the company by having it pay a dividend. He ordered it to pay those investors who had voluntarily put in at least 3,000 *livres* before December 1, 1665, 4 percent on their investment for the period from December 1, 1665, to December 1, 1668. Those who had put in additional sums during the period were to receive 5 percent. To pay the dividend Colbert secured for the company 404,545 *livres* from the royal treasury. Thus the dividend was a governmental manipulation, rather than a commercial transaction.

During 1668 and 1669 the trade of the company seems to have declined, despite the reorganization and the dividend. In 1670 an effort was made to remedy matters by sending Bertrand Pallu, sieur du Ruau, to the islands, to replace as general agent for the company a man named Cartier, who had been chiefly interested in winning a fortune for himself and who had even taken bribes from the Dutch. At the same time one of the directors, Pellissier, was sent out to supervise the business of the company in the colonies. He corresponded constantly with Colbert, who advised him to seek small profits and a larger turn-

<sup>23</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 229-35; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 478; cf. Helly, *De l'Idée du pacte colonial d'après Colbert*, p. 92.

over. Though Pellissier seems to have disregarded this counsel, Colbert was apparently satisfied with his work. By 1671 private traders were doing well enough, and the company poorly enough, to convince Colbert that it would be well for the company to concentrate its efforts on the slave trade and on taking to the islands livestock and salt meat.<sup>24</sup>

*Meat, slaves, tobacco, and sugar.*—Colbert was especially interested in the matter of livestock and meat. Salt beef, largely from Ireland, was one of the staple articles of food in the French West Indies. To buy it, money was sent out of France. Colbert sought, therefore, to attack the problem in two ways: first, by sending livestock to the islands, so that they could raise their own meat; second, by encouraging the shipment of salt beef from France to the islands. On January 22, 1671, a royal decree ordered that each ship of more than 100 tons sailing to the West Indies was to take with it 2 cows or 2 mares. Smaller ships were to be allowed to substitute bond servants for the animals, as it was hard to transport livestock on a small vessel. Colbert had high hopes for this plan at first, but it proved impracticable. A decree of June 4 rescinded the order, as of July 1, 1671.<sup>25</sup>

Somewhat more persistent were Colbert's efforts to substitute French for Irish beef in the diet of the islands. In the earlier days the West Indian colonies had produced much of their own food. Cassava and other local products had been raised for consumption. But as crops such as sugar and tobacco had proved increasingly profitable and as the Dutch had brought in large quantities of salted Irish beef, this imported beef had grown to be a staple article of food for both master and slave. After the Dutch were excluded from the island trade, Irish beef was still shipped to the West Indies via Nantes and La Rochelle. To interrupt this commerce, a royal decree of August 17, 1671, ordered that Irish beef in particular, and foreign meat in general, brought to France for shipment to the West Indies, should enjoy no entrepôt privileges, but should pay full import and export duties. A royal ordinance of November 4, 1671, pushed this policy even further. It forbade the export to the West Indies of all foreign beef, and foreign lard and linen as well. Ships were specifically ordered not to stop at foreign ports to secure cargoes of these products on their way to the

<sup>24</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 150-64; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 472-76; 483-87, 495-97, 503-4; II<sup>2</sup>, 637-38.

<sup>25</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 207-8, 226-27; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 503-4.

islands. It was also provided that each ship going to the colonies must have a certificate to show that the goods it carried were of French origin.

But as early as December 4, 1671, Colbert granted an exception to the ordinance and allowed certain Bordeaux merchants to ship to the islands some beef that they had just received from Ireland. He insisted, however, that no further dispensations would be granted. In January, 1672, in an effort to assure the islands of an adequate supply of meat, a royal ordinance provided for a bounty of 4 *livres* per barrel on all French beef shipped to the West Indies. The bounty was to be paid, one-half by the king, one-half by the West India Company. The new policy produced great protests in the West Indies. De Baas wrote Colbert that it would bring great suffering to the slaves, and even went so far as to allow, on his own authority, the purchase of meat and food from foreigners.

Colbert's attempt to substitute French for Irish beef did not succeed, chiefly, perhaps, because sufficient salt beef was not available in France. In September, 1673, the royal ordinance was relaxed, and merchants were allowed once again to send Irish beef to the islands. In December, 1673, the provisions of the royal ordinance relating to foreign beef were repealed, on the ground that to enforce them would produce a shortage in the islands. In September, 1677, a new ordinance once again forbade the shipment of foreign beef to the islands. But it seems not to have been enforced. In 1681, when an official suggested excluding Irish beef from the French West Indies, Colbert replied curtly, "His Majesty does not deem it advisable to forbid the sending to the islands of beef from Ireland."<sup>26</sup>

Even more important to Colbert than meat or livestock was the problem of securing an adequate supply of slaves for the French islands, for upon them the agricultural productivity of the islands had come largely to depend. There may have been Negro slaves in the French colony on Saint Christopher as early as 1625. Ten years later a Dutch trader brought thither a shipload of slaves, which he had captured from the Spanish. In 1643 the *Compagnie des Iles de l'Amérique* contracted for the delivery of 60 slaves to Guadeloupe. The demand for them grew and so outran the supply that in 1646, on Saint Christopher, a

<sup>26</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 310 ff.; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 441; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 230-31, 253-54, 259-60, 270, 304-5; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 531, 559; "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fol. 132.

male Negro cost 4,000 pounds of tobacco. By the 1650's many of the planters had 25 or 30 slaves. De Poincy had 600 or more on his various plantations. The supply increased, and in 1654 a slave could be bought on Martinique for a ton of tobacco. By 1655 the slave population in the islands had risen to the number of 12,000 or 13,000.

Most of the slaves in the early period were brought in by the Dutch. De Tracy reported to Colbert in 1664 that there was a profit of more than 200 percent in the slave trade, and that he had seen the Dutch bring into Martinique and Guadeloupe 1,200 or 1,300 slaves. Colbert was anxious to wrest this trade, like all others, from the Dutch, and he consistently urged the West India Company to get slaves in Africa and take them to the West Indies. Endeavoring to get this trade started, the company in 1665 entered into a contract with Carolof, a Protestant of German origin, who had served 8 years in the Dutch navy and 6 years on the coast of Guinea. Carolof was to carry on the slave trade for the company. In 1667 the company made treaties with the tribes on the Guinea Coast for trading privileges. Little seems to have been accomplished, however, and such slaves as arrived in the West Indies probably came from Dutch traders. In 1668 the company told de Baas to admit Dutch slave ships. During the next year Cartier, the agent of the company, was freely admitting Dutch slave traders to the islands, and slaves were being shipped from the Dutch colony of Curaçao to the French island of Marie-Galante.

In 1669 the company decided to send two ships to Africa on its own account. Though they found the Dutch and English on the Guinea Coast extremely hostile, the French, with the aid of Carolof, proceeded to establish a trading post at Offra. They presented a gilded carriage, which they had brought with them, to the Negro king of Ardres. It must have taken his savage eye, for he granted them assistance in their trade and arranged to send an ambassador to Louis XIV. The arrival of this dusky emissary, with three wives and three children, was later to cause a considerable sensation at Versailles. With the help of Carolof, the two ships secured cargoes of slaves. "La Justice" sailed from the Guinea Coast on March 30, 1670, with 434 slaves aboard. It reached Martinique after a voyage of 86 days, with 310 of the slaves still alive. "La Concorde" sailed somewhat later from the coast of Ardres, where it had secured 563 slaves. It reached Martinique in September, with 443 still alive.

The profit on these voyages was handsome and Colbert was much encouraged. To stimulate trade to the Guinea Coast, he secured the issuance of a decree on September 18, 1671, which was later reënforced by an ordinance of January 13, 1672. By these enactments it was provided that goods sent to the Guinea Coast from France need pay no export duties, and that a bounty of 13 *livres* per head would be paid on all slaves taken from Africa to the islands. To encourage private traders to engage in this commerce, a royal decree of August 26, 1670, had already abolished the duty of 5 percent which the company had been wont to charge on Negroes brought into the islands. The company made efforts to continue the trade, for in 1672 two company ships, one of them under the charge of Carolof, reached the islands with 550 slaves from Africa. But private merchants seem to have been reluctant to engage in the hazardous and difficult slave trade. Discouraged by the apathy of the private traders, Colbert sought, in the years after 1673, to secure slaves for the West Indies by the creation of new monopolistic companies.<sup>27</sup>

Another source of labor for the plantations of the French West Indies was indentured servants, and in the supply of such servants Colbert took, likewise, a keen interest. As early as the 1630's some hundreds of bond servants had been sent to the islands. The traffic was profitable, since the usual contract provided that the bonded man, in return for his passage, food, and clothes, would labor for three years for whomsoever bought his services. The cost of passage was not heavy, and the indentured servant could be sold in the West Indies for a half a ton of tobacco or more. After the cultivation of sugar cane became important, slaves were considered preferable to bond servants as laborers. But Colbert sought to encourage the sending to the islands of indentured servants, both because their labor was useful and because they swelled the French population of the colonies.

In 1669 a *mémoire* was sent to Colbert urging him to make it more attractive for bond servants to go to the West Indies, by reducing the term of service to one or two years, and to make it more profitable for the planters to buy them, by reducing the profits of the merchants who dealt in them. Colbert seems to have taken the advice to heart, for a royal decree of February 28, 1670, provided that the period of service in

<sup>27</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 283 ff., 165-72; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 409; II<sup>e</sup>, 563; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 197; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 164, fols. 524-25.

the islands for indentured servants should be not more than eighteen months. Another decree, of October 31, 1672, later reënforced this enactment. To assure a greater supply of bond servants, a decree of January 22, 1671 provided that every ship of less than 100 tons' burden sailing to the islands must take thither 2 indentured servants.<sup>28</sup>

Though the company did not meet Colbert's expectations in transporting to the island livestock, meat, slaves, or indentured servants, it was active from the first in bringing to France sugar and tobacco. Its importance in this respect declined only after the rise of private trading, in the years following 1669. Though tobacco had in the earlier period been the chief article of export of the French West Indies, it had been surpassed in importance by sugar before Colbert came to power. Colbert encouraged tobacco raising in the islands not only by restricting its production in France and in Canada, but also by favorable tariff treatment. Before 1664 tobacco from the French islands had been admitted free of duty, while other tobacco was taxed at the rate of 30 *sous* per pound. In the tariff of that year Colbert, it is true, put an import duty of 4 *livres* per hundredweight on tobacco from the French West Indies, but he kept a strong differential in its favor by taxing foreign tobacco at 13 *livres* per hundredweight. In 1670 he reduced the rate on tobacco from the French islands to 2 *livres*, and though he raised it to 4 *livres* again in 1675, it was only to meet the expenses of the Dutch war. The tobacco production of Santo Domingo alone rose from 600 tons in 1669 to 1,500 tons in 1674.<sup>29</sup>

In a similar fashion Colbert encouraged the exportation of sugar from the islands. Though the tariff of 1664 provided for a duty on all refined sugar of 15 *livres* per hundredweight and on all raw sugar of 4 *livres* per hundredweight, a decree of September 15, 1665, quickly changed the situation. The duty on refined sugar from foreign countries was placed at 22 *livres*, 10 *sous*. On sugar from Brazil or Saint Thomas it was set at 6 *livres*, 7 *livres* 10 *sous*, and 15 *livres*, depending upon how far the sugar had been refined. All sugar from the French islands was to pay only 4 *livres* per hundredweight, and this

<sup>28</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 281-83; "Nouvelles Acquisitions françaises," No. 9328, fol. 21; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 190, 207-8; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 370.

<sup>29</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 250-51; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 204, 292-93; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 2, decree, July 15, 1672.

duty was reduced to 2 *livres* in 1670. In 1675 the rate was raised to 4 *livres* again.

Colbert sought, also, to aid the West India Company to export the sugar it brought to France, so that the price might not fall too low there. He tried to promote the sale of West Indian sugar in Switzerland, in 1670. In the same year he arranged for a refund of the import duties on all refined sugar exported from France, though he refused to do the same for semirefined sugar when the West India Company requested it of him. During the next year he encouraged the company to seek markets for its sugar in Spain and to expand its exports of sugar so far as was possible. "You can do nothing more advantageous, nor which will be more pleasing to me," he wrote to one of the directors of the company, ". . . than to make the greatest possible efforts for the export of sugar." In 1672 one of the directors called to his attention the large increase in the importation of sugar into France since 1665. Colbert replied that he saw no cause for surprise, "since the French now carry on all the commerce of the islands and the sugar is not diverted by the foreigners as it used to be."<sup>30</sup>

*Liquidation of the company.*—In Colbert's conviction that the French had at last won control of the commerce with the French West Indies, lies the clue to the steps he took in regard to the West India Company, for the trade with the islands was actually in the hands of private merchants and not of the company. In 1662 not more than three or four ships belonging to French traders had gone to the French West Indies. In 1670 the number had risen to sixty. In 1672 it reached eighty-nine. Thus Colbert could rest assured that, even without the company, this commerce would remain in the hands of the French.

By October, 1671, Colbert, already sure that private merchants could handle the trade to the islands, urged the company to sell its superfluous ships to the Company of the North. By the next month the dissolution of the company had been decided on, for Colbert wrote to Pellissier urging him to close up promptly its accounts in the West Indies. Having received orders to wind up the affairs of the company, the directors seem to have lost interest in it. In January, 1672, Colbert wrote to tell them that they must go "assiduously to the office" of the company, since

<sup>30</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 266 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 204, 292-93; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decree, September 15, 1665; *liasse* 2, decree, July 15, 1673; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 558-59, 563, 600, 647; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III<sup>e</sup>, 527-28.



it was "important not only to preserve for those interested in this company the property" that remained to it, "but also to recover it so as to pay off promptly the voluntary shares."

The liquidation of the company was actually begun in April, 1672. In October it developed that the company was owed in the West Indies 13,740,000 pounds of sugar. To ease the situation somewhat a royal decree provided that only 3,000,000 pounds were to be collected there in 1673. The dissolution of the company had not been made public. But Colbert, fearing that rumors of its approaching end might make it difficult to collect its debts, ordered de Baas, in December, 1672, to let it be known in the islands "that the company will endure forever." In collecting what was owed it, the company secured considerable amounts of sugar. Colbert ordered the directors to pay off in sugar as many of the "voluntary" shareholders as would accept it. No effort was made to reimburse the nonvoluntary shareholders, that is, those financiers who had been ordered to pay to the company the fines levied on them by the Chamber of Justice. To help the company, a royal decree of December, 1674, provided that on the sugar and the tobacco it collected in the West Indies in settlement of its accounts there, and brought to France, it need pay only one *livre* per hundredweight as import duty.

The balance sheet of the company was made up in February, 1674. It showed assets of 3,268,797 *livres*, though Bellinzani, who had been working on the matter, felt that the assets were worth only 3,074,000 *livres*. Its liabilities totaled 6,597,350 *livres*, of which 5,382,682 *livres* were for sums owed to the king. There was therefore a deficit of at least 3,328,553 *livres*. From its inauguration, the company had received money to the extent of nearly 8,000,000 *livres* from the king, the stockholders, and the fines assigned to it, from loans advanced by the tax farmers, and from the tax on wax and sugar at Rouen.

The sale of the company's assets brought in 1,047,145 *livres*. To this the king added 250,000 *livres*, and with this money the voluntary stockholders were paid off in full. The king assumed all the outstanding debts of the company and took over all its concessions and remaining assets. These included the company's rights in America, its property, and the tax at Rouen. From these was formed the *domaine d'Occident*, which was farmed out for 350,000 *livres* a year, of which 250,000 *livres* was applied to the debts of the company. Thus the 3-percent duty

which the company had collected on goods brought to France from the West Indies by private merchants became a royal tax and was called the "*trois pour cent du domaine d'Occident*." Many of the individuals who had been active in the affairs of the company remained to take part in the management of the *domaine d'Occident*.<sup>31</sup>

One of the debts left by the company is of some interest. It consisted of sums owed to the ecclesiastics whom the company had established in the islands, together with the obligation to support them in the future. They were fifteen in number—three Jacobins and three Capucins on Martinique, six Jesuits on Martinique and Saint Christopher, one Capucin on Grenada, and two secular priests on Guadeloupe. By 1680 the debt to these churchmen amounted to 214,666 *livres*, of which the *domaine d'Occident* was paying off 55,600 *livres*, leaving 159,066 *livres* for the king to pay.<sup>32</sup>

The formal dissolution of the West India Company did not come until 1674, although since 1672 the company had been more or less inactive. An edict of December, 1674, suppressed the company, turned over its rights and property to the king, and announced the reimbursement of the voluntary stockholders. It pointed out that the colonies controlled by the company were in a most prosperous condition. They were peopled by more than 45,000 persons. To them each year went more than 100 French ships. The company had been founded, declared the edict, to increase commerce with the colonies and to put it in the hands of the French. These purposes it had achieved with complete success. Were it to be continued, the company might well win financial success as well. But now that it had attained the objectives for which it had been formed, it was more suitable that it should be dissolved and its lands returned to royal control.

The statement that more than 100 ships a year were going to the colonies was no idle boast. In 1674, 131 passports were granted to vessels going to the French West Indies, and in 1683 this number had risen to 205. The company had been abandoned only because its task was done. Colbert had secured for the French the trade to the islands, formerly carried on by the Dutch. Savary, writing in the year after the

<sup>31</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 236, 175 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 528, 531-32, 551-52, 552-53; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decree, October 26, 1672; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, p. 285; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 152-55; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 375-76.

<sup>32</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 11,315, fols. 35-36.

dissolution of the company, gave a statement on the subject which probably presents fairly well Colbert's own point of view. He said in part: <sup>33</sup>

It is important for the glory of the king that the public should know that if the Company of the West no longer exists it is not because it was unable to continue, but because it is no longer needed, having been formed only as a means to take the commerce of these islands from the hands of the Dutch, who alone controlled it for sixty years, so that His Majesty having attained the end which he had proposed to himself when he formed this company, thought it proper to dissolve it and to leave free the commerce of the West so that a greater number of his subjects might participate in the profits ~~that~~ are made in it. This plan has succeeded so admirably that more than 100 private ships are now in this great commerce; which shows that the Company of the West has succeeded the better, since it has at the same time produced a considerable advantage to the state and a very great damage to its enemies. . . . His Majesty revoked it, since the end for which it had been especially established had been attained, which shows that this plan had a much prompter success than had been hoped for, when the company was granted for 40 years the privilege of carrying on this commerce.

Savary pointed out that one of the chief advantages that had been secured from the foundation of the company was:

To have taken by means of it, from the Dutch and put into the hands of the French the commerce of all the French islands of America, which was so important to these Dutch that it kept busy more than 100 of their ships; and since the towns of Middelburg and Flushing had drawn from it their growth and wealth, the withdrawal of it from them has so inconvenienced them that many of the chief merchants of these cities have gone into bankruptcy. . . .

Furthermore, all the people of the kingdom get this advantage . . . that the products from the islands, such as sugar, tobacco, ginger, and others, which used to be brought them by the Dutch, are now sold by the French for one-half the price at which the Dutch used to sell them. Refined sugar, for example, costs now only 12 or 13 *sous* the pound; and used to cost from 22 to 24 *sous* before the establishment of the company; and the same is true of other goods proportionally; and this difference amounts to very considerable sums which are turned to the profit of the subjects of His Majesty.

*Summary.*—It might of course be argued that the benefits which Savary attributed to the company would have been more easily produced by the encouragement and support of private traders. This contention

<sup>33</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 152-55; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 179-80, 236; J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 130-34.

might be supported by pointing to the rapid growth of private trading after 1669, which made the continuation of the company unnecessary. But it seems likely that it was necessary, in order to break the way, to have some centralized agency, controlled and aided by the government. It is probable that Colbert originally thought that it would take longer than ten years to oust the Dutch from the island trade. But modifying his policies as things progressed, Colbert was able to attain his end in a single decade.

## 2. THE WEST INDIES

During the period of the West India Company and in the nine years which followed its dissolution, Colbert built up for the French islands a series of policies of considerable importance. They showed his interpretation of the function of colonies in a national economic system. They were intimately bound up with the economic development of the French West Indies. They long outlasted the company under the administration of which they were first formulated.

*The exclusion of foreigners.*—Of all Colbert's West Indian policies, the most fundamental was the exclusion of foreigners, and especially the Dutch, from the commerce with the islands. The West India Company had scarce been formed in 1664 when the Dutch were forbidden to trade with the French West Indies, on the ground that the plague existed at Amsterdam. During the war with the English (1666–67) the Dutch, as necessary allies, had to be admitted again. But no sooner was the war over than Colbert prepared to exclude them again. A decree of the Council of State of September 10, 1668, forbade the company to issue passports to foreigners. Yet in the face of this decree, the company continued to allow the Dutch to go to the islands. The directors even specifically ordered de Baas to admit Dutch ships loaded with slaves or livestock. It was also reported to Colbert that the Dutch were continuing their trade by pretending to be Frenchmen, or by getting passports in the names of Frenchmen.

On June 12, 1669, Colbert accordingly set up more stringent regulations. The king was to issue all passports for ships going to the West Indies. Such passports, valid for but eight months, were to be given only to Frenchmen. Shipowners provided with passports must post bonds that they would send their vessels directly to the West Indies. On the return of the ship to France, the shipowner must present to the

admiralty bureau which had issued the passport a certificate showing that the goods secured in the West Indies had been unloaded in France. On the same day Colbert sent orders to de Baas that with no exceptions whatever, all foreign ships were to be excluded from trade with the islands. In July, 1669, Colbert ordered de Baas to punish all colonists who helped foreigners to trade in the islands, to sink all foreign ships that came thither, and to be on his guard particularly against the Dutch from Saint Eustatius. He announced that the king was planning to send two or three royal naval vessels to aid de Baas in his task. In September he reiterated his orders.<sup>34</sup>

During the next year, 1670, Colbert continued his drive against foreigners with even more insistence. In February he wrote to the French ambassador in Holland and told of his delight at the economic damage being done the Dutch by excluding them from the islands. To de Baas, Colbert sent nineteen letters in the course of the year. In most of them he repeated his orders that foreigners must be kept from trading with the French West Indies. To reënforce his commands, he secured the issuance of a royal ordinance on June 10, 1670. It forbade all foreign ships to trade with the islands. That the officials might be more zealous in capturing interloping ships, it provided for a series of rewards. One-tenth of the value of any foreign ship captured was to be given to the Governor-general of the islands, one-tenth to the commander of the royal naval squadron in the West Indies, one-tenth to the captain of the vessel that made the capture, seven-twentieths to the crews of the royal vessels, and seven-twentieths to the West India Company.

A few days later Colbert explained his policy to Pellissier, the director of the West India Company. Not only was any foreign ship coming to the French islands to be seized, but any French ship loaded with foreign goods was to be treated in a similar fashion. This rule was to apply also to ships and goods coming from near-by islands under foreign rule. It was to apply to ships sailing close to the French islands, as well as to those which were actually caught in the act of landing. In July Colbert urged de Baas to stir up the natives of the West Indies and to supply them with arms, that they might war on the Dutch. But he was to do it in such a fashion that the Dutch could get no proof of it.

The strong policy adopted by Colbert brought forth protests from

<sup>34</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 83, 182 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 453-54, 456-59, 460-61.

the English. Colbert wrote to his brother, the French ambassador at London, in August, 1670, to explain that while the orders had been made general to avoid breaking the Franco-Dutch treaties, they were aimed not at the English, who did but little trade with the French islands, but exclusively at the Dutch. He added that the king had ordered de Baas not to enforce the more severe enactments as regarded the English. English ships would receive all suitable aid and comfort in the waters around the French islands, as long as they made no attempt to trade there.<sup>85</sup>

In October, 1670, Colbert wrote de Baas that he and the governors of the individual islands must get into the habit of instantly confiscating any Dutch or Flemish vessel that appeared in the islands. It would not be possible to end their trade until "many Dutch and Zeelandish vessels" were "sunk or confiscated." "The end is difficult enough," he added, "but it must necessarily be attained if we wish to have the satisfaction of keeping the whole commerce for the kingdom, and of seeing plenty in the islands, the multiplication of the colonies, and the increase of the cultivation of land." As to a company agent who had been convicted of trading with foreigners, Colbert felt sure that Pellissier must already have dismissed him and fined him 6,000 pounds of sugar. But in the future the penalties must be even heavier. For second offenses he suggested banishment as a suitable punishment.

At first, after receiving Colbert's orders on the subject, de Baas had been inclined to permit the Dutch to continue to bring certain goods. The company was quite ready to accept them. The planters needed slaves and livestock badly. Trade with the Dutch had the sanction of long years behind it. Gradually, however, Colbert convinced both de Baas and the company that he meant his orders to be literally obeyed. In March, 1670, though he was dubious on the point, de Baas rather reluctantly fined a French ship 2 tons of sugar for having traded with one of the foreign islands in the West Indies. Colbert confirmed his sentence and indicated that there were to be only two exceptions to the rule against trade with foreigners. The French on Saint Christopher might trade by land with the English portion of the island, and the contraband trade with the Spanish colonies was to be allowed. In Novem-

<sup>85</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 185 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 195-96; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 483-87, 487-91, 491-92.

ber, 1670, de Baas complained to Colbert, none the less, that it was peculiarly hard to stop trade with Saint Eustatius, since the Dutch there sold a barrel of beef for 80 pounds of sugar, while the French merchants were charging 300 pounds a barrel.

By the end of 1670 de Baas was writing, "The Dutch have stopped coming to our coasts." "They are greatly frightened." In 1671 Colbert kept reiterating his orders that all foreign ships and all foreign goods on French ships be seized and confiscated. And on November 4 of that year a royal decree forbade French ships to take foreign goods to the islands. Before the year was over, it seems that open trade with the Dutch had practically ceased. But it is probable that an illicit smuggling trade of some proportions still continued, especially with Saint Eustatius.<sup>36</sup>

In enforcing the French monopoly of trade with the islands under French control, Colbert was not content merely to issue orders to royal and company officials. He sent out royal naval squadrons in 1667 and 1668 to help suppress trade with the foreigners, and when they seemed to accomplish but little, he determined to establish a regular naval patrol in West Indian waters. In July, 1669, he decided to dispatch to the islands three naval vessels, "Le Gallant," "L'Aurore," and "Le Normand," under the command of de Gabaret. They were given orders to cruise about constantly in search of foreign traders, particularly Dutch ones from Saint Eustatius. The three vessels reached Martinique in January, 1670. Shortly thereafter they captured a Dutch ship of 300 tons, the "Queen Esther," under the command of Drik Jansen. The case puzzled de Baas, for Jansen had a passport not only from the West India Company but also from the French governor of Grenada. He wrote to Colbert for instructions and the minister replied, "In all cases where there is any doubt, the king wishes that they be decided against the foreigners." But when he received the response, de Baas had already released the ship.

De Gabaret busied himself in 1670 and 1671 with capturing Dutch vessels to such an extent that it was reported that Dutch goods were piling up unsold on Saint Eustatius. In fact de Baas accused him of being overzealous and of having seized a Dutch ship peacefully proceeding from Dominica to Curaçao with a load of wood. Colbert up-

<sup>36</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 189 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 495-97, 498-501, 503-4, 526-30, 669-70; "Manuscrits français," 11,315, fol. 54.

held de Gabaret's acts, and de Baas agreed to use the "utmost severity" himself. The activities of de Gabaret were, however, interrupted by a rebellion which broke out in Santo Domingo, of which the French portion was still peopled largely by unruly filibusterers. The French inhabitants there had all along refused to recognize the rights of the West India Company and they had accepted Ogeron, their governor, only as a representative of the king. In May, 1670, two Dutch ships came to trade with the French on Santo Domingo. Ogeron sought to put a stop to this commerce. At Petit Goave he was not even permitted to land. Sending to de Baas for aid, he retreated to the island of Tortuga and left Santo Domingo in the hands of the rebels.

Hearing the news, de Baas ordered de Gabaret to go with his ships to crush the outbreak. But de Gabaret, insisting that he was there only for patrol duty, refused to do so without direct orders from home. When Colbert heard of the situation, he sent complaints to the Dutch government as to the rôle of the two Dutch ships, ordered all Dutch vessels found near Tortuga or Santo Domingo to be seized, and commanded de Gabaret to put down the rebellion. De Gabaret reached Tortuga in February, 1671, placated the planters there, and persuaded them to take anew the oath of allegiance. Proceeding with Ogeron to Santo Domingo, de Gabaret met with defiance from the inhabitants. Six hundred armed men turned out to oppose him and answered his threats with derisive jeers. After burning a few houses at Petit Goave and Nippes, de Gabaret resumed his patrol duty, and shortly afterwards went back to France. Ogeron, returning to Santo Domingo somewhat later, found the trouble much abated. He promised and secured for the rebels a royal pardon, announced that trade with the island would be open to all French ships, and succeeded in pacifying the inhabitants. Both Ogeron and de Gabaret were of the opinion that all the trouble had been caused by the desire of the inhabitants to trade with the Dutch and by the activities of the Dutch traders.<sup>87</sup>

After the Dutch war broke out, despite Colbert's efforts to exclude foreign foodstuffs, numerous instances occurred in which foreign traders were allowed to bring in English beef or other provisions, by order of the governors of the various islands. In 1674 two Jewish merchants of Martinique were allowed to import a cargo of foodstuffs from the Barbadoes. The next year four English ships, one of which was

<sup>87</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 195-207.



from Boston, Massachusetts, were allowed to trade at Guadeloupe or at Martinique. Colbert rebuked de Baas for permitting such exceptions to be made. De Baas replied (February 8, 1674) that all trade with foreigners had ceased, but in the same letter he remarked that the colonists were raising much livestock and poultry and were selling them especially to foreigners. In an earlier letter de Baas had naïvely remarked that he was trying to establish a little private trade on his own account, and was sending sugar, ginger, and indigo to Curaçao on a royal vessel. It seems possible that de Baas told Colbert such things on rare occasions, to cover a much wider activity in which he was profiting from trade and from the bribes of Dutch merchants. Du Lion, governor of Guadeloupe, laid such charges at his door. Despite the fact that du Lion was a vain and fussy busybody, the charges may have been well-founded. Though Colbert seems to have distrusted de Baas, especially on the matter of trade with foreigners, he allowed him to remain in office until his death, in 1677.<sup>88</sup>

After 1672, during the Dutch war, royal naval vessels were almost continually present in the West Indies to protect the French islands. While they served to keep out Dutch traders in some degree, the Dutch in turn wrought havoc among the French ships going to the West Indian colonies. Fifteen ships sailed from Bordeaux to the islands in 1672. Most of them were captured by the Dutch, and these losses helped to ruin the Chamber of Insurance of that city. A royal ordinance of March 14, 1672, ordered that all ships going to the islands should be escorted. An embargo on all sailings was put in effect on February 24, 1674, though special permission was granted to twenty-six ships to go to the West Indies. From August to mid-December, 1674, not a single ship from France arrived at Martinique. Yet in the midst of all these difficulties, Colbert issued orders again that there was to be no trade with foreigners, or even with the foreign islands of the West Indies, and he forbade trade with the English under any circumstances.

In 1675 numerous ships from France reached the islands. But the next year a large Dutch naval squadron again disrupted commerce. It captured Cayenne from the French, and its commander ingeniously tried to sow disaffection among the inhabitants of Santo Domingo by promising them free trade and the large-scale importation of slaves, if they would accept Dutch rule. The French replied by sending out a

<sup>88</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 209-15.

large squadron under the comte d'Estrées. It captured the island of Gorée, off the African coast, where the Dutch had a trading post. It recaptured Cayenne and took possession of the Dutch island of Tobago. Colbert hoped that it would be able even to seize Curaçao, but the French fleet was ingloriously wrecked, when in August, 1677, d'Estrées attempted to attack that colony. D'Estrées was sent back to the West Indies in 1678 with a new squadron, which enabled the French to control the sea there until the end of the war. On September 11, 1677, shortly after the destruction of d'Estrées' first squadron, a royal ordinance reiterated the prohibition of all trade between foreigners and the French islands and forbade foreign ships even to approach any of the French West Indies.<sup>39</sup>

The occasion for the new royal ordinance lay in the fact that the *conseil souverain* of Saint Christopher had annulled the confiscation of some foreign goods that had been seized. That island presented special problems, since only an artificial land boundary separated the French from the English portions. As one official said, it took only "one kick of a foot to roll a barrel of beef or a bale of cotton to the French, and another to roll a barrel of sugar, in payment, to the English." In 1670 one of the officials on Saint Christopher had been convicted of aiding trade with the foreigners. After the Dutch war began, and the number of French ships arriving was reduced, trade increased between the French and the English on the island. In 1677 one of the farmers of the *domaine d'Occident* found the French and English peacefully doing business with each other. Beef in Martinique was one-fifth to two-fifths more expensive than in Saint Christopher. In 1679 Colbert, in view of the difficulty of stopping the land trade on Saint Christopher, gave orders that it would be sufficient if the sea trade with foreigners by the French on that island could be stopped.

In 1678 a new Governor-general named de Blenac was sent out to replace the late de Baas, and an official named Patoulet was dispatched to the islands to become their first intendant. Both Governor-general and intendant received repeated orders to enforce strictly the exclusion of foreign traders. Patoulet was even rebuked for allowing French ships without passports to trade in the islands. In 1680 d'Estrées was sent to the West Indies again, with a naval squadron, under orders to patrol

<sup>39</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 208, 244 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 262, 304-5; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 564-65, 590-94, 626-28.

the seas and shut out foreign traders. The next year two small war-ships were dispatched to the islands for the same purpose.

An incident in 1681 shows how inflexible Colbert was on the question of the French monopoly of trade with those islands under the rule of France. Sugar refining had been rapidly increasing in the French West Indies. There was a good market for the sugar in France. But little molasses could be sold there, nor could much rum be allowed to come in, to compete with the French brandy. A group of refiners offered to take the rum and molasses of the French islands to Canada, provided that they were allowed to dispose of the surplus in the English colonies in North America and bring back meat, livestock, and provisions, and that their goods be exempted from all import and export duties. Patoulet recommended the plan to Colbert, saying that he believed the English king would refuse to allow it, but that the refiners assured him that "the English who dwell near Boston, will not worry themselves about the prohibitions which the king of England may issue, because they hardly recognize his authority." The plan had much to recommend it. The projected trade was so natural that, even though illegal, it was to become an important feature of the next century. Yet Colbert rejected the proposal.

In the last years of his life, Colbert had the pleasure of realizing that his efforts to put all the trade of the islands in the hands of the French had been largely successful. In 1680 he could write, "The exclusion of the Dutch from the commerce of the islands has taken from them every year 4,000,000 pounds of sugar that they used to send into the kingdom." In the same year Patoulet wrote to him that the trade of foreigners in the French West Indies had ceased. A year later de Blenac made a similar statement, and other reports to the same effect came in during the remaining years of Colbert's life. As a matter of fact, some illicit commerce probably continued, but it shrank into insignificance in comparison to the volume of trade carried by the 205 French ships that sailed for the West Indies in the year of Colbert's death.<sup>40</sup>

*Trade, prices, and money.*—Once the company had ceased to function, it was this trade of private merchants on which Colbert concentrated his attention. He sought to prevent royal naval vessels from carrying trade goods, lest they interfere with it. He deplored the fact

<sup>40</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 216 ff.; "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fols. 54, 129, 131; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 122.

that royal officials in the islands engaged in commerce, but he felt that this practice was so difficult to stop that it might as well be tolerated, so long as the officials obeyed all the laws and carried on their business quietly. Despite such official competition, the trade to the islands grew and prospered mightily. In 1675 Savary called it "more advantageous to the business man, to the state and to the public, than any other of those which involve long voyages." He estimated that each year "goods and products superfluous" in France, to the value of 4,000,000 *livres*, were taken to the French West Indies, and that products of the islands to the value of 6,000,000 *livres* were brought back. The trade was peculiarly advantageous to France, according to Savary, since it required the export of almost no money, and since the goods brought from the islands harmed "no single one of the manufactures" of the home country.

Savary listed the islands and the goods they produced thus:

Martinique: raised from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 pounds of sugar a year.

Grenada: produced sugar and tobacco.

Guadeloupe: produced 3,500,000 pounds of sugar and a little tobacco.

Les Saintes: raised some tobacco.

Saint Christopher: produced indigo and ginger, as well as 5,500,000 pounds of sugar.

Saint Barthélemy: raised tobacco and vegetables for consumption on Saint Christopher.

Marie-Galante: produced 1,500,000 pounds of sugar, and tobacco of very high quality.

Saint Martin: produced little, because of its unhealthy climate.

Saint-Croix: produced sugar and very fine tobacco.

Tortuga: raised little, because of its poor soil.

Santo Domingo: produced very fine tobacco.

The exports from France to the West Indies included, according to Savary, everything necessary to feed and support the inhabitants, including pork, salt beef, flour, wine, brandy, cloth, furniture, tools, live-stock, and so on. A typical cargo sent out from La Rochelle or Bordeaux would be apt to include beef, pork, flour, brandy, wine from Bordeaux (or Madeira, if the ship stopped there), codfish, herrings, olive oil, cheese, butter, soap, iron, linen and kettles. A cargo from Normandy to the West Indies would be apt to include fustians, ribbons, woolens,

pens, desks, linen thread; from Brittany, thimbles, dishes, mugs, tableware, pins, paper, playing cards, guns, muskets, watches, swords, saddles, bits, bridles, stirrups, caldrons, kettles, kitchen utensils, locks, cutlery, hemp cloth, linens, bedspreads, lead, silk, serges, camlets, druggets, mirrors, skirts, dresses, men's clothes, stockings, ribbons, dry goods, and hardware.

The voyage to the West Indies was long enough, though compared to that to the East Indies it was short and easy. The log of "La Marie," a ship of fifty tons, will serve as a typical example of a voyage in that epoch. It left Bordeaux on January 17, 1684, and reached Martinique on March 14. After trading there for some weeks, it sailed on May 7, and after six days reached Port de Paix, Santo Domingo, where it took on 718 rolls of tobacco and 2 bales of cotton. It started its voyage home on August 9, and reached Bordeaux November 13.

It was Bordeaux which eventually proved the chief beneficiary of the rising West India trade. In 1661 only one ship, and a Dutch one at that, came to Bordeaux from the West Indies. In 1667 again only one ship came into Bordeaux. In 1671 12 ships sailed from Bordeaux for the French islands and 6 came back from there. In 1672 fifteen sailed to the West Indies, in 1673, 12, in 1674, 24, in 1676, 19, in 1682, 26, and in 1683 the same number. After the death of Colbert the trade at Bordeaux grew mightily, and in the eighteenth century that city became the metropolis of the trade between France and the West Indies.

Other ports, as well, shared in the new trade. In fact, under Colbert, La Rochelle was more important than Bordeaux. In 1672, 27 ships sailed from La Rochelle to the islands. In 1674 the number had increased to 35, and in 1685 it rose to 49. In general, too, the ships from La Rochelle, at this time, were a good deal larger than those from Bordeaux. Nantes also had its share in the traffic to the islands. In 1664, 2 ships sailed from Nantes to the West Indies. In 1672 the figure had risen to 24, and in 1683 it was likewise 24. Honfleur, Rouen, Havre, Saint-Malo, and Dieppe, though they had been largely used by the West India Company, had a smaller share in the trade to the islands, partly because their situation on the Channel made ships leaving them more liable to capture during the Dutch war. But in 1674 passports were issued to 9 ships from Honfleur, 10 from Dieppe, 7 from Havre, and 6 from Saint-Malo.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 568, 610; J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 135-42; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 237 ff.

Because they devoted their efforts largely to the production of staple crops like sugar and tobacco, the colonists in the French islands had always to import great quantities of foodstuffs. Colbert hoped that Canada would be able to supply the islands with flour, meat, fish, and wood for construction and for sugar casks. Again and again he directed the authorities in the West Indies and Canada to encourage the trade between these two portions of the French colonial empire. The energetic Talon did attempt to build up this commerce, from the Canadian end, but his efforts produced little effect, and two of the ships he sent to the West Indies were lost. Two years after Colbert's death, all duties were removed on rum, sugar, tobacco, cotton, and indigo sent from the French West Indies to Canada, and on foodstuffs shipped from Canada to the islands. Even so, little progress was made, for Canada did not produce any great surplus of foodstuffs, nor did it need a large quantity of West Indian products. In the end, it was to be the British North American colonies that supplied the French islands with many of the products they consumed. To work perfectly, Colbert's colonial system for the West Indies needed an African post to provide slaves, the home country to send manufactures and buy sugar and tobacco, and a productive temperate-zone colony to supply foodstuffs and lumber. Canada was assigned the last rôle, but it never learned to play the part destined for it.<sup>42</sup>

Being dependent on imported supplies for a large part of their food, the colonists in the French islands were particularly vulnerable in times when there was the slightest shortage. The merchants and, in the earlier period, the company were able to take advantage of this condition and charge high prices for necessary provisions. One of the chief complaints against the company and one of the chief causes of the various uprisings was the high level of prices maintained on goods bought from France. The natural response of the islanders, when they were thus put upon, was to have the prices of goods fixed by the royal or the local authorities. The practice became so common that the planters, for their own ends, extending it to include the regulation of the wages of labor.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 403, 410, 511-12, 640; "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fol. 131; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 315-18, 334.

<sup>43</sup> On March 2, 1666, the Council of Martinique issued a regulation which was re-enforced by an ordinance of the Governor-general. It declared that it was necessary to fix the wages and the food to be given to artisans, especially masons and carpenters, "because of their dearth, their insolence, and their laziness." It provided that for a

Colbert was opposed to price-fixing because he was anxious to encourage merchants to go to the islands and he feared that if they were subjected to such regulations, they would become disgusted with trade in the West Indies. He was, on the other hand, anxious to see that plenty of goods were taken to the islands so that the colonists would be able to buy them at reasonable cost. In 1670, when he was working hard to stimulate private trade to the French West Indies, he sought insistently to put an end to the practice of setting prices by authority. To the directors of the company he wrote in February, 1670, that for the governor and council to fix prices was contrary to liberty, "which is the soul of commerce." The private traders should be allowed freely to sell their goods as they saw fit. The most that should be done to keep prices down was to force merchants to sell their goods within a certain time. In a letter to de Baas, in April, 1670, Colbert pointed out that when the commerce of the islands was in the hands of foreigners, it was permissible to set prices by authority for the protection of the colonists. But now that it was carried on exclusively by French merchants, such a practice was "entirely contrary to freedom, which is always the soul and the support of commerce, without which it can never be established or increased." De Baas was therefore to end all price-fixing and to establish "complete liberty of purchase and sale."

In June Colbert called the fixing of prices "the complete ruin of the islands" and ordered the company director, Pellissier, to see that it was stopped. On the ninth of the same month was issued a royal ordinance which forbade the practice of setting prices on goods at wholesale or at retail. Prices were to be adjusted only by bargaining between the buyer and the seller. In October a royal regulation forbidding officials in the colonies to fix the prices of goods was likewise issued. De Baas wrote Colbert in November, to report that price fixing had been ended according to orders. "The merchants sell as they please," he declared, "without opposition other than that of the buyer who protects himself as best he can, . . . although the people believe that this freedom is very harmful to them." But from time to time price-fixing was taken up

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week's work there was to be given each artisan 6½ pounds of cassava, 7 pounds of meat and lard, one pint of brandy, and 20 pounds of tobacco. The hours of labor were to extend from one-quarter hour before sunrise to one-quarter hour after sunset, with two hours off for lunch. Artisans were forbidden to stop work during the hours of labor. The regulation was renewed September 7, 1678. See Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 150-51.

again, for in May, 1677, the king had to issue specific orders to the Governor-general of the islands forbidding the setting of prices.<sup>44</sup>

Closely related to the problem of prices was that of money for the islands. In the early days of these colonies, as with most others, barter was the rule; goods were bought, and wages paid, in tobacco or sugar. But as trade in the islands grew, the demand and the need for money there increased. As early as November, 1663, a royal decree ordered the manufacture of 100,000 *livres* of silver and copper coin for use in the West Indies. On November 26, 1665, an edict was issued on the same subject. The edict took up the problems that had been pointed out to the king by the West India Company. It seemed that laborers paid in sugar and tobacco, in order to get money for these goods, had to send them to France. To get the money back to the islands took more than a year. The laborers preferred to emigrate to the Dutch or English islands, where they could be paid in coin. On the other hand, if French coins were sent to the islands, they remained there but a short time since those who traded there preferred to sell their goods for cash, rather than for sugar or tobacco.<sup>45</sup> To solve these difficulties, the directors of the company had begged the king to have new coins made "with less intrinsic value than those which are current in the kingdom, and of which the nominal value is to be increased above the actual value, both for the advances that the company will make and for the risk in sending it to that country, and this is the only means of making it stay there."

Colbert seems to have preferred barter to a money economy for the islands, since he told de Baas in September, 1668, to encourage the exchange of goods for goods, rather than the use of coin. In his instructions to Pellissier and du Ruau of February 26, 1670, he still seemed to prefer barter to money transactions for the West Indies. But he probably intended his remarks to apply to the sale of staple crops and other large deals and was willing for money to be used for wages and retail buying, because a week earlier a royal declaration had provided for minting new coins for the islands. The declaration was drawn up in

<sup>44</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 397, 472-76, 476-81, 483-87, 487-91, 669; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 194-95, 301-2; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 371.

<sup>45</sup> The real reason probably lay in the fact that until the sugar production increased somewhat, as it did in the succeeding years, the islands had an unfavorable balance of trade.



much the same terms as the edict of 1665. It said that the introduction of money would facilitate the payment of laborers and serve to keep them in the islands, to the benefit of agriculture and the Catholic religion. It provided for the coinage of 100,000 *livres* of new types of coin which were to have circulation only in the lands conceded to the West India Company. They were to be of copper and silver and were to be of the same weight, fineness, and value as the coins current in France. The denominations were to be 15 *sous*, 5 *sous*, and 2 *deniers*. In order to reimburse the company for the risk of sending the coins out, the king agreed to remit all the royal fees on the manufacture of the coins.

In spite of the provisions of the declaration, the company reverted to the policy of increasing the nominal value of the coins. Pellissier, writing Colbert from Martinique in July, 1670, lauded the new money as "an infallible means of increasing and facilitating commerce," and added, "I can tell you the people wish it." But he went on, "The rather great increase in the nominal value of this money was the only expedient that can be imagined for preventing the export." It might look, he admitted, as though the company were gaining by this device, but the surplus value was rather a deposit in the hands of the company than a profit accruing to it. He remarked that the inhabitants wished the new coins had been more distinctly different from those of France than they were. He explained that the 15-*sous* pieces were to circulate at the value of 21 *sous*, the 5-*sous* pieces at 7 *sous*. Colonists returning to France might either take a loss by changing the island coins for the French coins of the same size but of lower value, or they might convert them into sugar and take that back to France. No other money was to have currency in the islands, Pellissier declared.

On November 18, 1672, a royal decree provided for sending more money to the islands. It remarked that the 100,000 *livres* sent by the company had greatly aided commerce. In the future all French coins, as well as the special West Indian ones, were to have currency in the islands, but at a higher nominal value than in France. Pieces of 15 *sous* were to circulate at 20 *sous*, 5-*sous* pieces at 6 *sous*, 8 *deniers*, 15-*deniers* pieces at 20 *deniers*, and other pieces in proportion. In 1674 de Baas seems to have suggested the prohibition of the export of money from the French West Indies, for Colbert wrote him saying that while he hoped the money brought into the islands would stay there to facili-

tate commerce, the king, knowing that liberty was "the soul of commerce," wished the merchants left free to do as they saw fit.

The problem of money for the islands remained, however, a pressing one, since the Council of Martinique petitioned the king in September, 1679, to send to the French West Indies 300,000 *livres* in coined money. It pointed out that when contracts and sales were in terms of sugar, there were many lawsuits and disputes as to the quality of the sugar. It declared that the use of money would improve the quality of the sugar, since that of better quality would bring better prices. The use of money would encourage markets, fairs, and the production of small manufactured goods. It would also encourage economy, for "an individual finds it harder to pull an *écu* out of his pocket, than to sign a note for a greater value of sugar." The petition went on to say that the money sent out by the West India Company had all gone back to France, since it was suitable for use there. It asked, therefore, that while the new money for the islands should be of the same intrinsic value as that of France, prohibitions against sending it out of the islands should be issued. The problem of money for the islands was, however, gradually nearing solution. As the production of sugar increased, the islands began to enjoy a favorable balance of trade, and before many years they had an ample stock of coin for domestic use and for export, as well as bills of exchange on Paris which could be used to purchase slaves and goods.<sup>46</sup>

*Population.*—To Colbert, the problem of money in the islands seemed much less important than that of population. He was earnestly desirous of increasing the population of the colonies, so as to make them more productive. As early as 1665 he wrote to Clodoré, governor of Martinique, to tell him that his services would be judged by the number of new colonists he was able to attract to the island, and that he was to send a list of them to France every three months. With great frequency Colbert, in the instructions he sent to the islands, recurred to the subject of increasing their population.

In 1668 he wrote de Baas that early marriages were to be the rule in the French West Indies. Boys were to be married at eighteen or nineteen, girls at fourteen or fifteen. De Baas was to bring this about by "frequent exhortations" to the heads of families. The governors of

<sup>46</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, xxx-xxxi, 421, 425; III<sup>2</sup>, 410, 472-76, 583-85; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 188-89, 266-67, 327-29.

the several islands and the other chief officials were to coöperate with him in this work. The magistrates were to lend their authority. If necessary the king would issue some "edict, declaration, or ordinance" on the subject. A year later Colbert wrote de Baas not to contest the legality of marriages informally contracted. In 1670 Colbert told the directors of the West India Company, who were being sent to America, that the true advantage of the company lay in increasing the number of inhabitants on the islands. "This increase," he remarked, "results in the increase in the consumption of the goods of old France and in the cultivation of the land, which results in the increase of the products which it brings forth, and these two things should produce wealth and benefits for the company."

De Baas was apparently troubled by Colbert's insistence and wrote telling him that it was difficult to increase the population, and that it would be best to send out from France boys of about fourteen years of age and girls about ten years old, to be brought up on the islands. To this suggestion, Colbert replied with a good deal of impatience, "Be convinced, I beg you, that it is not within the power of the king, however powerful he may be, to people these islands by force." Nor did Colbert approve a long list of propositions sent the same year by de Baas, which included a prohibition against the return of colonists to France and the sending of fishermen and doctors to the islands. De Baas kept protesting his desire to increase the population of the islands. In November, 1670, he wrote Colbert, "I often reproach myself that my wishes for that are more ardent than they are for my own salvation."

So interested was Colbert himself in the matter that even when protests were made as to the presence of Jews in the islands, he refused to let these be excluded, since they were valuable additions to the population. In 1670 he wrote that regulations might be made to put an end to the usuries of the Jews, but "they must not be driven out." In 1671 he ordered de Baas to give the Jews the same privileges as the other inhabitants, and merely to see that their practice of their religion did not scandalize the Catholics. He pointed out that since they had made considerable investments in the islands and were improving the cultivation of the land, they were to be considered as useful members of the community. Yet twenty-four days after Colbert's death his policy was reversed and a royal ordinance was issued commanding all Jews to leave the colonies.

During the Dutch war the commanders of naval vessels sought to fill the gaps in their crews by recruiting soldiers and sailors in the islands. But even this practice seemed to Colbert likely to depopulate the colonies, and he had it forbidden by a royal ordinance of April 11, 1676. After the war Colbert resumed his efforts to increase the number of people in the islands. He even took up the suggestion that he had scorned when made by de Baas. In July, 1680, Seignelay wrote to Patoulet, the intendant of the French West Indies, that arrangements had been made for sending to the islands 300 boys. Three months later Seignelay notified the intendant that 150 girls, "who have been taken from the hospital,"<sup>47</sup> were being sent. Sisters from the hospital were to be sent to watch over the conduct of the girls on the voyage. Patoulet was directed to "take care of these girls" until they were married. Such shipments were not unadulterated successes, for on August 24, 1682, Seignelay wrote to Harlay, the *procureur général* of the *Parlement* of Paris, as follows:

The king, having decided to send some girls to the American islands, I beg you to let me know if 50 could be secured from the *Hôpital général*. And as there were some of evil life among those sent out last year to the islands, who caused a great deal of disorder, it will be very important not to include any of those who have been shut up for debauchery.

Harlay was able to secure the girls, and Seignelay ordered a present of 12 *livres* to be made to each of them. Since in the years following his father's death Seignelay continued to arrange the shipment of girls to Santo Domingo and other islands, the practice must have been considered worth while, on the whole.

Despite all the efforts of Colbert and his son, the population of the French islands did not increase remarkably in the years from 1661 to 1683. On Saint Christopher there was an actual decrease for part of the period, since in 1671 it had 8,120 inhabitants, of which 4,468 were slaves, while in 1682 it had only 7,278 inhabitants, of which 4,301 were slaves. On Guadeloupe the population increase was, in good part among the slaves, for in 1671 there were there 7,477 inhabitants, of which 4,617 were slaves, while in 1682 there were 8,161 inhabitants, of

<sup>47</sup> Undoubtedly the *Hôpital général* of Paris. A *mémoire*, written in 1717, described the colonists of the French West Indies by saying, "In their origin one can say without exaggeration that they were all without property, and most of them drawn from the most wretched of the people, who, finding no way to live and subsist in the kingdom, were transported to America." See "Nouvelles acquisitions françaises," No. 9328, fols. 11-12. The statement is, perhaps, too strong, but there must have been much truth in it.

which 4,954 were slaves. On Santo Domingo, on the other hand, there was a rapid rise in population. The French portion of the island was inhabited in 1669 by about 1,500 persons, mainly whites, and most of them filibusterers of one sort or another. By 1681 Santo Domingo had a number of well-cultivated plantations and a population of 6,648, of which 2,102 were slaves. It was this colony (which after its independence was called Haiti) that was to have the most remarkable growth in the succeeding years. In 1687, four years after the death of Colbert, the total population of the French islands was estimated at almost 50,000.<sup>48</sup>

In striving to increase the population of the islands, Colbert felt that one of the best methods was to see that peaceable conditions, order, rigid law enforcement, and settled business procedure existed there. In 1668 he ordered de Baas to "make the inhabitants taste the same sweetness and quiet" that the subjects of the king enjoyed in France. Order and speedy justice would, Colbert was sure, attract new colonists. The next year he wrote de Baas that the objective—attracting new colonists—could be attained only by treating the inhabitants well in every way. They must be gradually and gently accustomed to subjection to authority, since they were unused to it. It would be wise, at the start, to excuse minor faults and to punish only such as might really harm the islands.

A year later Colbert told the company directors who were going to the islands, that the people there must live "in some little comfort and plenty," if they were to send home such reports as would attract new settlers. A few months thereafter Colbert instructed de Baas to enforce the laws and to punish crimes just as in France, but not to expel colonists from the islands save for grave offenses. When de Baas reported that luxurious living among the inhabitants was leading many of them to debt and ruin, Colbert replied that if creditors were given justice promptly, and speedily put into possession of the debtor's property, it would act as a deterrent against falling into debt. He repeated these instructions in a later letter, pointing out that those who fell into debt were not the type to make valuable colonists, and that the creditors

<sup>48</sup> For the sources of the section on population policy, see the following: Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 397, 408-9, 456-59, 473-74, 479, 488, 495-97, 522-23, 669; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 435; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Lois et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 298; "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fols 69, 82, 131; "Nouvelles acquisitions françaises," No. 9328, fols. 45-46; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 336-37; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II 284-85; Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, I, 414 ff.

if, allowed to seize the property, would undoubtedly manage it better. In 1681, however, Colbert caused to be issued a decree forbidding the seizure for debts of slaves, much as the seizure of livestock was forbidden in France.<sup>49</sup>

*Agriculture in the islands.*—In all the orders Colbert sent to the West Indies, he showed himself most anxious to increase the agricultural productivity of the islands. De Tracy, in the regulations which he issued in the spring of 1665 and which must have been prepared under Colbert's guidance, offered tax exemptions to those who started new sugar plantations. Again and again Colbert wrote to officials in the islands that among their primary duties were the encouragement of the clearing of the land, the creation of new plantations, and the effective cultivation of those already established. When, in 1671, there seemed danger of an oversupply of sugar, Colbert urged the increased production of indigo, cotton, ginger, and pepper, that the prosperity of the islands might rest on a more diversified base. In 1673 he told de Baas that since too much sugar had been raised in the last two years, there was grave danger that the price of sugar would fall. He again urged the diversification of crops and suggested that silk culture might profitably be introduced into the islands.

To stimulate the cultivation of the land, Colbert proposed a number of devices. In 1671 he told de Baas to rescind all grants of land in cases where the proprietors were not clearing and cultivating them. Some years later he directed Patoulet to encourage the colonists to cultivate their land well, by bestowing upon those who did so "little honors and prerogatives." He even indicated that the king might be willing to consider the erection into marquisates, baronies, and counties, of the lands of those who, by clearing very wide areas, employing great numbers of bond servants, and raising large crops, showed themselves worthy of such honors.<sup>50</sup>

But the importance of the West Indian agricultural production was not limited to the islands themselves. For both the staple crops—sugar and tobacco—Colbert had to work out elaborate policies which involved both France and the islands. The favorable tariff treatment accorded

<sup>49</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 408, 456-59, 474-75, 478, 486; "Manuscripts français," No. 11,315, fol. 129.

<sup>50</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 138-44; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 409, 413, 526-30, 565; "Manuscripts français," No. 11,315, fols. 53, 130-31.

to tobacco by Colbert has already been mentioned. As another step to preserve the home market for tobacco from the French islands, Colbert forbade its production in Canada, and severely restricted it in France. In 1672 Colbert wrote Talon, the intendant in Canada, that the king wished no tobacco to be grown there, since the "culture of this herb would be harmful to the islands of America." As a result, comparatively little tobacco was raised in Canada. But Colbert had more difficulty in restricting its production in France. Brought from America, it had been introduced into the south of France, the region about Bordeaux, and even into Normandy. Two decrees, of March 14, 1676, and of February 6, 1677, prohibited the production of tobacco in France, save in certain specified places in the generalities of Bordeaux and Montauban; and a decree of October 3, 1676, forbade especially *la dame, seigneur de Verton*, and other inhabitants of Verton to grow any tobacco. A royal ordinance of August 21, 1681, reiterated the prohibition against raising tobacco in France, save in a few specified places.<sup>51</sup>

Though the decrees had excluded Normandy from the areas where it was permitted to plant tobacco, their enforcement there proved difficult. In May, 1676, Colbert wrote to Le Blanc, the intendant of Rouen:

In regard to the parishes round about Louviers which raise tobacco, it is no great evil that they should cease to cultivate it, since their tobaccos are not as good as those which come from the islands of America, and since, in time, they might decrease the commerce carried on in those islands.

He wrote again to Le Blanc in the same month:

In regard to the five parishes of the *élection* of Pont de l'Arche which are growing tobacco, I will order the farmers [of the tobacco monopoly] to let them harvest it, but measures must be taken to stop the cultivation of this herb in all Normandy, because it is not necessary, because this province has more need of wheat than of tobacco, and because the continuation of this culture will seriously injure the commerce of the islands.<sup>52</sup>

In June he returned to the matter again and told Le Blanc, "It is quite certain that the raising of tobacco in the kingdom ruins entirely the commerce with the French American islands, which it is vital for the good of the state to maintain." None the less he ordered Le Blanc to allow the Norman parishes to raise their tobacco crop for 1676, with-

<sup>51</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 540; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 2, decrees of March 14, 1676, October 3, 1676, February 6, 1677; ordinance of August 21, 1681, and so forth.

<sup>52</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8751, fols. 52-53, 56-57.

out, however, giving them any inkling that they were to be permitted to do so. Le Blanc was to have the farmers of the tobacco monopoly make enough of a demonstration to convince the peasants that tobacco raising was not to be permitted. Then in 1677 he was to see that no tobacco at all was raised.

Yet in 1677 the problem came up all over again. On July 2 Le Blanc issued orders that lists of all lands on which tobacco was being raised should be made and sent to him and that the officials of the tobacco monopoly should not interfere with the crop. On July 30 Colbert wrote the intendant that this was bad policy, since it might encourage the people to continue to raise tobacco. He added:

You must make some demonstration of wanting to pull up the tobacco that has been planted, to show the people that they must not continue to sow their lands with this herb, and to so warn them by this demonstration that if they continue next year, one can have it pulled up without difficulty.<sup>53</sup>

In 1680 Colbert was still writing to Le Blanc to tell him that the land used for tobacco might better be sowed to wheat, since growing tobacco in France would hurt the French islands, where the plant grew "much better and more abundantly." But this was a circular letter sent out to all the intendants, so it does not imply that much tobacco was still being raised in Normandy. Its real purpose is contained in the request for data on the amount of tobacco grown in each generality, the kind of land used for it, and so on.<sup>54</sup>

A report of 1680 from the intendant of Bordeaux shows that the decree of February 6, 1677, was fairly well executed in his generality, for he urged that tobacco planting be allowed freely in the whole of the *élections* of Agen and Condom, rather than merely in specified parts thereof. He pointed out that the tobacco crop was very advantageous, since a vegetable crop might be planted before it and harvested in June, and since the land was used for wheat in alternate years. Each *journal*<sup>55</sup> produced about 1,200 pounds of tobacco a year. The tobacco sold for from 5 *livres* to 20 *livres* the hundredweight, according to quality. The average price was 8 or 9 *livres*. About one-third of the tobacco

<sup>53</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 376-77; "Manuscrits français," No. 8751, fols. 193-94.

<sup>54</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fol. 350; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 377; "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, p. 380; Clément, in the second citation, gives the letter as if it were one addressed specifically to Le Blanc, whereas the document cited in the third citation shows it to have been a circular letter.

<sup>55</sup> The *journal* was an old measure supposed to indicate the amount of land one man could plow in a day.



was of high grade, while one-third was medium, and one-third was low grade. That raised near Clérac was so good and so well prepared that much of it was exported to Spain and Italy. The intendant insisted that the tobacco raised in the generality of Montauban was of an inferior quality. He submitted the figures for 1679, which showed that in the areas where tobacco growing was permitted in the generality of Bordeaux,<sup>56</sup> 1,368  $\frac{1}{2}$  *journaux* had been planted to it. Using his own estimates, this would indicate a production of about 1,663,800 pounds, worth about 141,423 *livres*. This was no insignificant amount, as the annual domestic consumption was at this time about 1,500,000 *livres*' worth or less. The intendant added, too, that he had been told that twice as much land had been planted to tobacco in 1680 as in 1679.<sup>57</sup>

Despite all the difficulties, Colbert seems to have succeeded in restricting, to a considerable degree, tobacco production in France. Though the tariff did not, by any means, shut out the importation of tobacco from Brazil, from England, and even from Germany, still a large part of the French market was reserved for West Indian tobacco. Other portions of Colbert's tobacco policy were, however, less favorable to the islands. The formation of the tobacco monopoly proved positively harmful.

To raise money for the Dutch war, Colbert, in 1674, declared the sale of tobacco a state monopoly. On November 30 of that year the new monopoly, together with that of the marking of pewter, was farmed to Jean Le Breton, a bourgeois of Paris, for six years. He was to pay 500,000 *livres* a year for the first two years, and 600,000 *livres* a year for the last four. By the terms of his contract, the prices of tobacco were fixed thus: foreign tobacco at wholesale, 40 *sous* a pound, at retail 50 *sous* a pound; tobacco from France or the islands at wholesale, 20 *sous* a pound, at retail 25 *sous* a pound; snuff, 10 *sous* the ounce for ordinary quality, 20 *sous* for medium quality, and 35 *sous* for the finest imported types. Despite the protection set up against foreign tobacco by the high import duties and the resulting high prices which

<sup>56</sup> They were, for the *élection* of Agen: Gontault, Tonnains dessus, Tonnains dessous, Fauillet, Clérac, La Fitte, Aiguillon, Vertueil, Grateloup, La Parade, and Caumont; for the *élection* of Condom: Vilton, Puch de Gontault, Calonges, La Girière, Montsurt, Le Mas d'Agenois, and Damazan.

<sup>57</sup> G', No. 131, *Mémoire* of de Ris to Colbert, August 3, 1680; G', No. 1893, Report to Colbert on the tobacco farm, 1679.

the monopoly was forced to charge for it, the sale of French and West Indian tobacco was not extremely large, because the taxes and the monopoly made it expensive also.

Then, too, the farmer of the tobacco monopoly alone had the right to sell tobacco. To him, the importers must dispose of all the tobacco they brought in from the islands. The terms and the conditions of sale, and the power of the monopolist were such that the importers preferred to bring products other than tobacco. In the years following 1674 these conditions resulted in such a decrease in tobacco raising in Martinique and Guadeloupe that by 1680 it had almost ceased to be grown there. Even in Santo Domingo, which was the great tobacco island of this period, the production of tobacco fell greatly. In 1680, none the less, Colbert renewed the monopoly and farmed it out to a certain Claude Boutet. In the next year the tobacco growers of Santo Domingo petitioned Colbert for relief, begged him to abolish the monopoly, and asked him to see that they got a better price for their tobacco. A decree of April 8, 1681, reaffirmed the right of importers to reëxport tobacco from France, and thus get it out of the clutches of the monopoly. But this relief was too mild. In the succeeding years the planters of Santo Domingo turned more and more to the production of indigo, cotton, cocoa, and sugar. Partly, at least, as a result of the policies to which Colbert was driven by the financial needs of the state, it was sugar and not tobacco on which the French islands were to base their prosperity.<sup>58</sup>

Though Colbert's policies toward sugar<sup>59</sup> largely escaped the pressure of fiscal motives, they were complicated by matters having to do with the refining of that commodity. When Colbert came to power, sugar was already being produced in large quantities in the French West Indies, especially on Saint Christopher, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. In 1664 de Tracy wrote the minister that the people in the islands were

<sup>58</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1893, Report to Colbert on the tobacco farm, 1679. AD XI, No. 48, Contract, November 30, 1674; decree, June 29, 1680, and so forth; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 252-59.

<sup>59</sup> For Colbert's sugar policies, see the following: Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 260 ff.; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 138-44, 208-9, 257; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 173-74; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances de France*, I, 546-48; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decrees of September 15, 1665, December 10, 1670, January 15, 1671, June 3, 1671, May 24, 1675, April 18, 1682, September 28, 1684; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 551, report on sugar imported into Rouen from West Indies, 1674-81; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 498-501, 526-30; II<sup>2</sup>, 559, 600, 601; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, pp. 277-78; "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fols. 61, 133.

giving up all other crops, to devote themselves to sugar raising. On this letter, Colbert jotted down notes to the effect that he hoped sugar would become so common that the islanders would be driven to raising other commodities, such as cotton and indigo, "because the diversity of products" would "certainly cause abundance in the islands." Yet de Tracy's regulations of 1665 held out substantial inducements to those colonists who would start new sugar plantations. As a matter of fact, Colbert was anxious to increase the sugar production of the islands, save when there appeared to be danger that a surplus of sugar would force down prices. With his generally static notion of commerce, he did not realize that the consumption of sugar in France and Europe could be increased almost without limit.

*Sugar refining.*—Aside from encouraging sugar production in the islands, Colbert was ardently desirous that the colonial sugar should be refined in France. Before 1664 the Dutch had taken the raw sugar of the islands, refined it in Holland, and sold it to France and the rest of Europe. Colbert wished the French to refine the sugar for their own market, and large quantities for export as well. With this in mind, shortly after 1664 Colbert encouraged a business man, named Guy Terré, to start two refineries in Rouen, and granted him subsidies. In 1672 he ordered Gaspard Maurellet to start a refinery at Marseille so as to reduce the market there for Dutch sugar and Brazilian *cassonnades*.<sup>60</sup> At Orléans a refinery was built with the aid of two foreign experts, one from Maestricht and one from Pomerania. At Angers a refinery was founded by a Dutchman named Van den Bosch. At Saumur one was started by another Dutchman named Tinneback, from Rotterdam. At Nantes several were organized, with the assistance of refiners from Hamburg. A second refinery at Marseille was founded by a Hamburger named Vedenant. Others were started at Dunkirk, Dieppe, La Rochelle, Bordeaux, Tours, and Toulouse. By 1683 there were in France some 30 refineries, using annually almost 18,000,000 pounds of raw sugar.

The tariff of 1664 gave high protection to French refineries by setting the import duty on all refined sugar at 15 *livres* the hundred-weight, while that on all raw sugar was fixed at 4 *livres* the hundred-weight. To protect the raw sugar of the islands, these rates were soon

<sup>60</sup> Dark brown sugar obtained from the juice of the sugar cane by evaporation and draining off the molasses.

modified, by a decree of September 15, 1665, which raised the duty on refined sugar from foreign countries to 22 *livres*, 10 *sous* the hundredweight, and fixed it at 15 *livres* for *cassonnades* from Brazil, at 7 *livres*, 10 *sous* an *muscovados* from Brazil, and at 6 *livres* on *paneles*.<sup>61</sup> The duty on all sugar from the French islands was left at 4 *livres*. The schedule on foreign sugar remained in force through Colbert's lifetime, but the duty on sugar from the French islands was cut in half in 1670, then put back to 4 *livres* in 1675, by a decree of May 24. This last rise was attributed by the decree to the need to raise funds to protect the islands during the Dutch war. But it remained in force till after 1683. The increased duties on foreign sugars in 1665 were avowedly to give added protection not only to the French islands, but also to the refiners in France. Those at Rouen had asked for higher duties, scaled as to the degree of refinement, on all foreign sugar, lest a manufacture "so fine and so useful to the state" should be driven out of France. Though the duties imposed on imported sugar were applied at first only to the area of the "five big farms," a decree of January 15, 1671, provided that they should also be collected as duties of the *douane de Lyon*, the *patente de Languedoc*, the *comptablie et convoie de Bordeaux*, the *traites de Charente et d'Arsac*, and the *coutume de Bayonne*. Thus they were extended to include nearly all of France.

Further to aid the sugar refiners in France, a decree of January 24, 1671, granted to the exporters of refined sugar a rebate of the duties paid on the importation of raw sugar. Since the import duty had just been set at 2 *livres* a hundredweight, and since it took two pounds or more of raw sugar to make one pound of refined, the rebate was fixed at 4 *livres* per hundredweight on all exports of refined sugar from France. The day before the decree was issued, Colbert had written a director of the West India Company urging the increased export of refined sugar. Some three months earlier he had noted with delight that the number of refineries in France was increasing, that France had ceased to import foreign sugar, and that exports of refined sugar had actually commenced.

The Dutch did not give in without a struggle. They made arrangements with merchants of Nantes and Saint-Malo to ship to Holland raw

<sup>61</sup> *Muscovado* was sugar still coarser and less refined than *cassonnades*. *Paneles* or *panela*, was a type of sugar even coarser and darker.

sugar from the islands and to take back to France the refined product. Colbert was soon aware of what was going on. In October, 1670, he told the intendant of Bordeaux that refined sugar from Brittany and that from Holland were to be charged the same import duties as it was impossible to distinguish between the two. "The Bretons are great cheaters," he declared, "and especially those of Nantes." In January, 1671, he was considering drastic measures, for he wrote to a director of the West India Company that as soon as enough ships were going to the islands from La Rochelle, he would issue no further passports for the West Indies to ships of Saint-Malo and Nantes. On April 24, 1671, Colbert wrote to the municipal officials of Nantes. The king, he said, was determined to have "all the sugar coming from the islands of America refined in France." Yet he had learned that merchants of Nantes were taking large quantities of raw sugar to Holland, where it was refined and shipped back to France or sent elsewhere. The king had therefore ordered Colbert that, beginning immediately, no more passports for trade to the West Indies were to be issued to the merchants of Nantes.

Saint-Malo must have made its peace, since no steps seem to have been taken against it. It took the Nantes merchants almost eight months to make theirs. They protested against the withdrawal of the passport privileges and pointed out the injury done to Nantes and to the West Indies. They gave promises that they would not take raw sugar to Holland nor bring back to France the refined product. Finally, on strength of these assurances, a royal decree of December 14, 1671, restored to them the right to secure passports for the trade to the islands. The same decree specifically forbade them to take raw sugar to foreign countries. But at the end of the Dutch war Colbert was again worried by rumors that raw sugar was being taken from the French West Indies to Holland via Nantes, La Rochelle, Saint-Malo, and even directly.

Though Colbert was ever anxious to prevent the export of raw sugar, since it would go to aid the Dutch refiners, he left open the technical possibility of exporting it. Practically, it was too expensive to reexport it legally, because of the cost of unloading it, paying import duties, paying export duties, and reloading it on ships. When it was suggested to Colbert in 1670 that he allow *muscovado* from the islands to be re-exported without payment of import or export duties, he refused. A year after Colbert's death, his policy on raw sugar was written into law.

A decree of September 28, 1684, formally forbade all export of unrefined sugar.

Since in practice most of the raw sugar from the islands was used in France, its price depended largely on the French market. As the production of sugar increased in the islands, the price fell, and it stayed at a low level during all the 1670's. In 1679 a hundredweight of sugar in the French West Indies brought only from 2 *livres*, 10 *sous* to 3 *livres*, and Patoulet alleged that the French refiners had entered into a conspiracy to keep the price down. The low prices created a serious problem for the planters. Colbert made vague gestures toward a solution from time to time, by urging that the islands turn to more diversified crops and thus reduce sugar production. On one occasion he gave equally vague assurances that France would buy all the sugar the islands produced. He never even considered allowing the islands to export raw sugar directly to foreign countries, and, as indicated above, he opposed even sending raw sugar to foreign countries via France.

There remained a solution which Colbert did employ, but which in the end proved dangerous. It was the establishment of refineries in the islands. The advantages were obvious. Labor was cheap in the West Indies. The sugar, when refined, was much less bulky, and could therefore be more cheaply transported on the long ocean voyage. Raw and refined sugar from the French islands paid equal duties in France. The refined sugar could be exported to foreign countries via France, while it was not practical to export raw sugar thus.

In 1667 Claude Gueston established a refinery in Guadeloupe. Three years later a Jesuit, Père Brion, established one in Martinique. In the latter year de Baas urged that refineries in the islands be encouraged. He pointed out the lack of capital and of experienced refiners in the islands and suggested that the West India Company send over six refiners. In 1672 Colbert told de Baas to persuade the planters to establish refineries. He instructed him particularly to assist the sieur de Louver, who was being aided in starting a refinery on Guadeloupe by the West India Company. Colbert likewise instructed du Ruau Pallu, the agent of the company, to stimulate the founding of refineries. In 1674 Colbert again urged de Baas to get the planters to build refineries. When the sugar duties were increased in 1675 to meet war expenses, Colbert left the duty on refined sugar the same as that of raw sugar.

By 1679 two refineries had been established on Martinique and three

on Guadeloupe. But all of them seem to have been small. In that year Patoulet arrived in the islands as intendant, and soon he was writing to Colbert of plans to build two more at Martinique. They were to have a capacity of nearly 1,000,000 pounds a year and were to be ready for operation in 1680. He inquired as to Colbert's attitude toward the project. Colbert instructed him in 1680 to "work, by every means, to increase the number of refineries." In 1681 he repeated these instructions, saying "It is certain that this expedient can contribute considerably to the increase of commerce."

In 1680, Patoulet was enthusiastically supporting the refineries in the islands. He reported that forty workmen had been brought from France, that the refineries were growing, that the price of sugar had increased by a third, that he was going to encourage the establishment of more refineries, and that with proper aid the islands could refine enough sugar to supply all France. Four years later Patoulet himself owned a three-eighths interest in one refinery, was assisting others, and seems to have been regularly engaged in the sugar business.

In 1682 the price of raw sugar in the islands had risen to 5 *livres* and even to 6 *livres*, 10 *sous* the hundredweight. Patoulet reported that the refineries might gain 600,000 *livres* a year for the planters. He pointed out that 18,000,000 pounds of raw sugar at 5 *livres* the hundredweight brought in only 900,000 *livres*, whereas 6,000,000 pounds of refined sugar at 25 *livres* the hundredweight would bring in 1,500,000 *livres*. The difference, he was sure, would be spent by the planters on French goods and so increase the trade of the mother country. In addition, the workers of the refineries consumed eggs, vegetables, and other local produce, thus benefiting the *petits habitants*. He admitted that refining in the islands would kill that in France. But he felt this would be no great evil, since there were only 30 or 40 refineries in France and most of these were in the hands of foreigners or Protestants.

While Patoulet was waxing so enthusiastic over the prospects for refining in the islands, the refiners in France were beginning to protest vigorously against the West Indian competition. Up to this time, Colbert had been encouraging refineries both in France and in the islands. Probably refining in France had not grown so fast as he had hoped, and he had wished to supplement it. There can be little doubt, however, that he visualized the islands as producers of raw sugar and

the mother country as the place where it was to be refined. When the matter necessitated a choice, Colbert, naturally enough in the light of his ideas, decided to support the French refiners, as against those in the islands. On April 18, 1682, a royal decree, issued on Colbert's advice, placed a duty of 8 *livres* per hundredweight on refined sugar from the islands. This was double the old duty. The ostensible reason given was that the 4-*livres* duty established in 1675 was reducing the royal revenues. The real reason was to aid the refiners in France to compete successfully against those in the West Indies. Twenty weeks after Colbert's death, on January 21, 1684, a decree frankly adopted this new policy. It forbade the establishment of any new refineries in the West Indies, on the ground that they hurt those in France. Patoulet's protests against the decree went unheeded.

*Summary.*—Under Colbert the production and refining of sugar grew tremendously. In 1674 the islands produced something like 12,000,000 pounds of sugar. Eight years later they were producing half again as much. In 1661 there was almost no sugar refining being done in France or in the islands. In the year of Colbert's death, 29 refineries in France and 5 in the islands used 20,700,000 pounds of raw sugar.<sup>92</sup>

Colbert was not so successful in some of the other aspects of his policy toward the French West Indies as he was in increasing the refining of sugar. But on the whole, he achieved his main objectives. He had sought to exclude foreigners from the trade of the French islands. By 1683 that trade was almost wholly in the hands of the French. He had sought to increase the commerce of France. By 1683 more than 200 ships were plying between France and the islands. If he did not succeed in greatly increasing the population, that was to be remedied in good time. If his tobacco monopoly decreased tobacco production in the islands, that was more than counterbalanced by the increase in the production of sugar. If he subordinated the interest of the colonies to those of France, there was scarce a statesman of his age who would have done otherwise. Colbert's policies bound the islands to France and made them truly French. It was Colbert who laid the basis on which the islands were to grow and prosper until, in the eighteenth century, they supplied most of Europe with its sugar, brought wealth to themselves and to France, and became the most-prized over-sea possession held by any European power.

<sup>92</sup> See footnote 59 above.



## 3. CANADA

In 1661 the chief power in Canada rested in the hands of the new governor, Baron Dubois d'Avaugour, and the ascetic, aristocratic, dictatorial Laval, bishop of Petrée. The Company of New France was moribund, and sixteen years earlier had turned over its rights in the fur trade to the inhabitants of the colony. These rights had been largely vested in a group of the leading colonists which was known as the *Compagnie des Habitants* and which exploited its position unscrupulously. The Iroquois had driven the Jesuit missionaries out of the area that is now New York State and in 1660 they had even launched an attack on Canada itself. The trade of the colony was languishing, but considerable profits were still being made from its furs.

*Events and personages, 1661-83.*—There were signs, however, that the French government was about to take a new interest in Canada. In 1661 a "Relation" by the Jesuit, Le Jeune, appealed to Louis XIV to strengthen the colony and to build it up for the good of religion and the glory of France. In the same year there came to power Colbert, who was ready to divert a portion of his energies to the task of empire-building. In 1662 the Canadians sent one of their number to France, to ask the king for aid and support. This emissary, Pierre Boucher, secured a friendly hearing and took back with him a group of new colonists, a hundred soldiers, and the promise that a regiment would be sent to protect Canada from the Iroquois.

By 1663 things had really begun to happen. Plans for the West India Company were in the air. The Company of New France was persuaded to cede its rights to the crown. An official, Louis Gaudais Dupont, was dispatched to Canada to establish royal rule there. He took with him the plans for a new system of government, which he proceeded to set up. The old council for the colony had consisted of the governor, the bishop, two other members selected by them, and a representative of the three towns of Montreal, Quebec, and Trois Rivières. This was now replaced by a body known at first as the *Conseil souverain*, and later as the *Conseil suprême*. The new council consisted of the governor, the bishop, and five colonists selected by them. To it were attached an attorney-general and a secretary, who sat with it, but did not vote. All political authority rested with the king, for the council did not have even the right of registration and review over royal decrees, edicts, and ordinances. It was, however, the final court for most cases arising in

Canada. It could issue decrees on matters of local interest and it could regulate commerce, though all its acts were subject to royal approval. While it could not lay taxes, it had the right to disburse governmental funds.<sup>63</sup>

In 1663 a new governor was appointed. Bishop Laval, who was in France at the time, and the Jesuits, with whom he was on the best of terms, brought pressure to bear on the king, with the result that Safficey de Mézy, a friend of Laval's, was chosen for the post. Laval and Mézy proceeded to Canada together. But, contrary to all expectation, they were soon embroiled in a bitter quarrel. It was ended only by Mézy's death in 1665. Laval was working hard at this time to build up the seminary which he had founded at Quebec. He affiliated it with the newly created *Séminaire des missions étrangères* at Paris. The training of priests was begun at Quebec in 1663, and the education of boys five years later. To the seminary at Quebec, Laval gave his own income as bishop.

Meanwhile, in 1664, the West India Company had been created. Technically almost all political rights and all commercial ones over Canada were given to it. Actually, because the company was more interested in the West Indies, and because it was itself as much a tool of the state as a commercial enterprise, the king and Colbert retained political and, to a large degree commercial control over the colony. In 1665 Colbert explained, for instance, that since the company was unable to find persons suitable to act as governors, it had been glad to have the king select a person of his own choice.

Early in 1664 the king sent the marquis de Tracy, an old soldier and able administrator, to set affairs in the West Indies in order. After some months of hard work, de Tracy, at the behest of the king, proceeded to Canada. He reached Quebec, which, though a settlement of only seventy houses, was the capital and chief town of the colony, in 1665. Not long after him arrived the sieur de Courcelle, who had been appointed governor of Canada, and Jean Talon, who had been chosen intendant of the colony. Talon, whose family belonged to the *noblesse de la robe*, had been intendant at Hainaut. He was in Canada only from 1665 to 1668, and from 1670 to 1672. But such was his energy and his ability that he left an indelible mark on Canadian history. In him Colbert found his most effective instrument for molding

<sup>63</sup> Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 339-64.

the colony into the forms which he desired. In 1665, also, there arrived in Canada, in fulfillment of the king's promise, the Carignan-Salières regiment of veteran soldiers, fresh from fighting the Turks. It numbered 100 officers and 1,000 men. Thus by the end of the year, Canada was equipped with a governor, an intendant, and the largest military force under arms in the New World, not to mention de Tracy, who was royal Lieutenant-general for all the western possessions of France.<sup>64</sup>

With such military strength at hand, it seemed that the time had come to crush, once and for all, the Iroquois menace. De Courcelle rashly insisted on leading an expedition of over 500 men against the Indians, in the dead of winter. It started out in January, 1666, and got back to Quebec in March, only after the most terrible sufferings and privations. Though it penetrated as far as the village that was one day to become Schenectady, it accomplished little. It remained for de Tracy to do the work effectively. In September, 1666, he led an expedition past Lake George, into the heart of the Mohawk country. He ravaged it, burning villages, and destroying the food supplies of the Indians. By November, he was back in Quebec. The Iroquois came in 1667 to sue for peace, and to ask that Jesuit missionaries be sent them once more. Peace was granted them. The danger from the Indians was temporarily abated. De Tracy sailed back to France.

After de Tracy's departure, the government was in the hands of de Courcelle and Talon. So energetically did Talon busy himself with tax collections and administration that de Courcelle complained that there was nothing left for him to do. Talon was busy, too, at Colbert's behest, encouraging agriculture, mining, trade, and shipbuilding. He became something of a landed proprietor himself, after he secured a grant for a large area called *Les Islets*. In 1671 his estate in Canada was, as a reward for his services, erected into a barony, and he became the baron des Islets. Talon returned to France in 1668. He reported to Colbert that Canada would be more prosperous if trade there were made free. In accordance with his suggestion, Colbert, in 1669, abolished the monopoly of Canadian trade that had been granted to the West India Company. But he reserved for the company one-fourth of the beaver skins and one-tenth of the moose hides coming from Canada, a monopoly of the fur trade at Tadoussac, and the exclusive right to transport

<sup>64</sup> Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, pp. 364 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>a</sup>, 389 ff.; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 59 ff.; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 6 ff.

fur to France. As the company still had to help defray the costs of governing Canada out of its profits, its interest in that colony was even further reduced.

Talon was back in Canada by August, 1670, and was soon hard at work again. In that year he took up seriously the plans that he had made for exploring the unknown lands to the west. He sent out Louis Jolliet, a fur trader, to journey along the northern shore of Lake Ontario. One of the chief objects of his exploration was to seek the source of a large lump of pure copper which had been brought to Talon by some Indians. On his trip Jolliet encountered Robert Cavelier, sieur de la Salle, and Dollier de Casson, a Sulpician priest, who had joined forces to explore along the southern shore of Lake Ontario. La Salle reached what is now Ohio, and Jolliet and Dollier explored as far as the Detroit river. In 1670 Talon sent out Jolliet and the sieur de Saint-Lusson to investigate the shores of Lake Huron. Talon's general scheme for the extension of geographical knowledge and French control seems to have shown amazing insight. He would have liked to push the frontiers of Canada north toward Hudson's Bay, south into the Hudson River Valley, and southwest into the Mississippi basin. But in 1672, before his plans had been more than sketched in action, Talon asked permission to return to France. It was granted to him, and he departed forever from the scene of his arduous labors.<sup>65</sup>

By the time Talon left Canada, Colbert and Louis XIV, occupied with the Dutch war, were losing interest in that colony. But they did it an inestimable service by dispatching thither to succeed de Courcelle as governor, Louis de Buade, comte de Frontenac. With a varied military career behind him, Frontenac was over fifty. Separated from his wife, almost penniless, he was imperious, able, and headstrong. Of all the French officials who ever came to Canada, Frontenac proved most dextrous in dealing with the Indians. He seemed to inspire in them just the right mixture of awe, affection, respect, and fear.

Finding that the Indians were trading more and more down the Hudson Valley with the Dutch and English of New York, Frontenac decided to establish a French post on the Great Lakes, which would attract the Indian trade and at the same time be a bulwark of defense for the colony. In 1672 he had sent out an exploring expedition headed by Jolliet, which was later joined by Père Marquette. The explorers

<sup>65</sup> Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 373 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 389 ff., 511 ff., 449, 539 ff.; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 26 ff.

reached the Mississippi and went down it as far as what is now Arkansas. In 1673 Frontenac himself led an expedition to the Great Lakes and built there a fort which came to be called by his name. In the following years La Salle, who worked more or less in harmony with Frontenac, improved the fort, secured land grants thereabout, built up an extensive fur trade, and constructed ships for trading on the lakes. Despite his status as a noble and as governor, it seems almost certain that Frontenac improved his private fortune by engaging in the fur trade through intermediaries like La Salle. The disputes which arose in the colony had at their root the control of this trade, as well as questions governmental and religious.

The most dramatic of disputes had to do with the governor of Montreal, François Perrot, a nephew of Talon. Using his position to advantage, he was protecting the *coureurs des bois*, or Frenchmen who ranged the forests and traded with the Indians. Perrot was undoubtedly reaping some of the profits of their trade. Frontenac, partly because he had orders from home, and partly, it seems, because these men of Perrot's interfered with the fur traders he was favoring, was seeking to put down the *coureurs des bois* as a class. Naturally enough, Frontenac came into conflict with Perrot. There was a series of disputes and affrays, which ended only when Frontenac put Perrot in prison for ten months and then shipped him back to France. Despite the fact that Perrot had powerful friends and relatives, Louis XIV put him in the Bastille for a few weeks, to vindicate his governor's authority. Then he released him, sent him back to Canada, and told him to apologize to Frontenac. Colbert and the king both wrote to Frontenac to be more lenient and tactful, and to avoid engaging in the fur trade.

In 1675 occurred two events of importance: Laval was made bishop of Quebec, and a new intendant, Duchesneau, was sent out to Canada, which had had no intendant since the departure of Talon. The one-man rule of Frontenac had led to embroilments of all sorts. The sending of Duchesneau to limit the governor's power was to result in still more trouble. By this time there were two parties in Canada. One was that of Frontenac and his adherents, such as La Salle. The other was that of his opponents, led by bishop Laval, and supported by the Jesuits and by those with whose trade or interests the governor had interfered. Duchesneau quickly aligned himself with the second party.

From the time the new intendant arrived until 1682, there was con-

stant trouble between the opposing parties, ranging from bickering, backbiting, and writing letters home to disputes that threatened to end in violent conflict. One of the chief sources of argument was the liquor traffic with the Indians, a matter closely related to the fur trade. Laval wished to stop it, Frontenac to continue it. In 1678 a meeting of the leading colonists was called, at Colbert's suggestion, to discuss the matter. La Salle urged continuing the sale of liquor; Jolliet opposed it. The vote showed Frontenac's mastery of the situation, for fifteen out of twenty approved the sale of liquor to the Indians. Laval was furious at the result.

Duchesneau himself seems to have become involved in the fur trade, and that fact probably still further embittered his relations with Frontenac. At any rate, after years of seeking to pacify the contestants and to unite them in working for the good of Canada, Colbert and the king, wearied at last, recalled both Frontenac and Duchesneau in 1682 and sent out a new governor, Lefebvre de la Barre, and a new intendant named Meulles. De la Barre and Meulles arrived in 1682, to find that the whole of the lower town at Quebec had been wiped out by a catastrophic fire. Neither these officials nor their immediate successors proved very efficient. In 1689, to cope with the rising Iroquois menace, the king sent out Frontenac once more. Frontenac retained his post as governor until his death in 1698, at the age of seventy-eight.

While Frontenac, Duchesneau, and Laval struggled for power in Canada, the work of exploration was going steadily forward. Duluth was exploring and trading in the west, and missionary priests were penetrating the wilderness. But of all the exploits, those of La Salle are the most thrilling. After the building of Fort Frontenac, La Salle had returned to France, interested people in his work, and secured funds from his relatives to the extent of 500,000 *livres*. In Canada he had enlisted the aid of Henry Tonty, and he already had the support of Frontenac. In 1678 he secured large new land grants and the right to build more forts and trading posts. In 1679 he visited Niagara Falls and built ships for trade on the lakes. But one of the ships, with a valuable cargo, was lost, and his years of labor seemed to result chiefly in disappointment. In 1681 and 1682, urged on by Colbert, La Salle went down the Mississippi to the Gulf, and constructed a post on the Illinois river as well. But with the arrival of la Barre, La Salle found that he had an enemy, rather than a friend, in the position of governor. La

Barre took possession of Fort Frontenac and disrupted La Salle's fur trade.

In 1683 La Salle returned to France and interested the king and Seignelay in the potentialities of the west. The end of his career was as adventurous as the earlier part of it. In 1685, with an expedition of sailors and colonists, he sailed for the mouth of the Mississippi. He overshot his mark by 400 miles and landed in what is now western Texas. His ships were wrecked or captured by the Spanish. An attempt to reach the Mississippi overland in 1686 failed. When he was again trying to lead his men to the great river in the following year, they turned on him and shot both him and his nephew.<sup>66</sup>

*Paternalism.*—Colbert's policies toward Canada should be placed against the background of this brief review of the events and personages in the history of that colony from 1661 to 1683. One of Colbert's chief objectives as regards Canada was the establishment and maintenance of royal authority there. For this purpose, he limited the authority of the Council. To this end, he gave the royal officials detailed instructions, and made them feel directly responsible to him and to the king. His conception of colonial government was thoroughly paternalistic. In the instructions Colbert gave to Talon, as the new intendant was about to start for Canada, he wrote:

The king, considering all his subjects in Canada from the first to the last almost as if they were his own children, and desiring to fulfill his obligation to make them feel the sweet tranquillity and the happiness of his reign as much as those who are in the middle of France, sieur Talon will study primarily to aid them in all things and to stimulate them to manufacturing and commerce, which alone can bring plenty to the country and comfort to their families.<sup>67</sup>

"The education of children being the first duty of fathers," Talon was to see that the colonists were trained in piety, industry, and "love and respect for the royal person of His Majesty." He was even told to visit the people's homes and "to enter into their little domestic affairs." Frontenac was likewise instructed to act *in loco parentis* to the colonists. He was to see that they enjoyed the same "sweetness and tranquillity as the other subjects of His Majesty." He was to "prevent the oppres-

<sup>66</sup> Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 434 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 533-38, 557-61, 585-89, 590, 606-8, 608-9, 614-19, 619-21, 622-23, 632-49; Margry (ed.), *Découvertes et établissements des français*, I, 17-28; II, 405-20, 447 ff.; III, 161 ff.

<sup>67</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 394-95.

sion of the poor by the more powerful and better situated inhabitants," like a father protecting the weaker from the stronger among his children.

The government in Canada was indeed paternalistic. Prices were fixed for the protection of the people. Those who charged too much for goods were occasionally punished. For instance, in 1667 Jacques de la Mothe, of Quebec, was fined 22 *livres* for selling wine and tobacco at exorbitant prices. In 1673 Frontenac issued regulations for the city of Quebec, which harked back to the ordinances by which medieval towns had sought to protect their citizens. A few of these regulations will indicate their tenor. They provided for the establishment of a public measurer of grain, and a public measurer of firewood, for the fixing of the price of bread by the public authorities, for the licensing of cabarets and other drinking places, for the posting in the public rooms of such establishments of the ordinances against swearing and blasphemy, for inspection of weights and measures, and for the inspection of all goods by wardens chosen from among the craftsmen. Keepers of inns were not allowed to purchase supplies in the public markets till eight o'clock in the morning in summer, and nine o'clock in winter, that the bourgeois of the town might have the first opportunity to supply themselves. No buildings were to be constructed without Frontenac's permission. Each new house built was to be provided with a latrine. No livestock was to be kept in the lower town. Dogs were to be "withdrawn" into the houses before nine o'clock in the evening. If a fire was started through carelessness, the guilty person was to be responsible for all the damage done.

The type of paternalistic government which Colbert desired for Canada had distinct advantages. It did result to a certain degree in the protection of the weaker inhabitants. It provided royal aid for many public projects. But it fostered a dependence on Paris for matters that might well have been settled in the colony. When the belfrey of the church in Quebec was in need of repairs, the matter had to be referred to Colbert for authorization for the use of royal funds in the work. It was easy for officials in Canada to evade responsibilities they should have shouldered. It took so long to get a letter from Quebec to Paris and back again that necessary actions were sometimes long postponed. On the other hand, this same distance from the center of government forced the officials to a good deal of independent action. From



the time the last boat sailed in the fall till the first one arrived in the spring, they could expect no word from Colbert. A handicap to good government in Canada arose also, to some extent, from the distance that separated it from France. It was part of royal policy to set one official to watch another. In Canada they did more than watch one another; they squabbled endlessly. Since it took so long for their disputes to be referred to Paris, they dragged on and on, and interfered seriously with colonial government.<sup>68</sup>

Colbert was very anxious to preserve the authority of the king unhampered in Canada. He was therefore much distressed when Frontenac, shortly after his arrival in Canada, called an assembly of the chief citizens of the colony and with much pomp and ceremony organized the meeting on the basis of the ancient French form of a division into three estates—the clergy, the nobles, and the bourgeois. To Colbert, this smacked too much of the provincial estates which gave him so much trouble in France, and of the Estates General of the kingdom, which historically had proved more of a menace than an assistance to the kings. Accordingly, he wrote to Frontenac in March, 1673:

Since our kings have for a long time considered it to their advantage not to assemble the Estates General of their kingdom, so as, perhaps, to abolish insensibly this ancient form, you also should give only very rarely, or better never, this form to the body of the inhabitants of that country; it will even be necessary, after a little while, when the colony is a little stronger than it is now, gradually to abolish the syndic who presents requests in the name of all the inhabitants, it being proper that each should speak for himself and that no one should speak for all.<sup>69</sup>

*Church versus state.*—More serious in the colony was the menace of the Church as a power independent of, and sometimes opposed to, the state. The Church, and especially the Jesuits, had played a large part in the founding of Canada. It enjoyed considerable authority. It owned wide lands. It regarded the Indians as its special charge. Since only Catholics were admitted to the colony, all the French inhabitants technically owed it allegiance. At court, the Jesuits and bishop Laval could bring powerful pressure to bear on the king. The pious in France regarded Canada as an especially fertile missionary field, glorified by the

<sup>68</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 395, 516, 535; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 386–87; "Collection Clairambault," No. 499 (for Frontenac's regulations).

<sup>69</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 358.

daring and the martyrdom of the French priests, who had faced deep forests, wild beasts, and cruel savages to carry on their work. The king himself, as the years progressed, was growing more and more religious.

The problem of the Church in Canada was one which worried Colbert and to which he recurred again and again. His attitude was clear. He felt that nothing should be allowed to hamper nor to infringe upon the authority of the king. But he was forced to caution by the power of the pious, the influence of the Church, and the attitude of the king himself.

In his instructions to Talon in 1665, Colbert praised the Jesuits for attracting colonists to Canada and for awakening interest in it by their written accounts of the country. But he added that they had taken upon themselves there "an authority which has passed the limits of their true field, which should have to do only with consciences." Bishop Laval, he remarked, had been chosen by the Jesuits and was dependent on them. He then went on to say:

It is absolutely necessary to keep in just balance the temporal authority, which resides in the person of the king and in those who represent him, and the spiritual, which resides in the person of this bishop and the Jesuits in such a way always that the latter should be inferior to the former.<sup>70</sup>

Bouteroue, who temporarily replaced Talon in 1668, received similar instructions. Colbert told him that the Jesuits had too much power and by threats of excommunication forced too strict a standard of life upon the people. Bouteroue was to remember their services to the colony, but he was to seize every opportunity to get them to relax their severity without letting them see that he disapproved of their conduct. If he should let them see that, "he would render himself useless in the service of the king." The next year, on the very day on which he penned a letter complimenting bishop Laval on his assiduity in working for the colony, Colbert wrote de Courcelle, the governor, to tell him to limit the power of the Jesuits, but to act with circumspection. He added hopefully that as the number of inhabitants increased, it was certain that the royal authority would "overtop the ecclesiastical and take again the true extent it should have."

One of Colbert's plans was to send to Canada Recollet priests. They had played an important part in the early missionary work. They were jealous of the Jesuits. Colbert hoped, by dividing the ecclesiastical

<sup>70</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 389.

authority, to strengthen that of the king. In 1669 he wrote bishop Laval, to announce that he was sending over four Recollets. He hoped that the bishop would allow them to administer the sacrament to all who come to them and to take possession of the property of their order. In 1672 Colbert ordered Frontenac to support the Recollets, so as "to balance the authority which the Jesuit fathers" might "take upon themselves to the detriment of that of His Majesty." The next year he wrote Frontenac that he was sending two more Recollets and urging that two others "of the strongest" be sent out to act as a counterpoise to the Jesuits.<sup>71</sup>

Colbert's instructions to Frontenac show the delicacy with which he felt the conflict between church and state must be handled. He spoke of the services of the Jesuits and then went on:

His Majesty desires that the sieur de Frontenac have much consideration for them; but in case they wish to carry the ecclesiastical authority further than it should extend, it is necessary that he let them know gently the line of conduct which they should follow; and in case they do not mend their ways, he will oppose their plans adroitly without allowing an open break or any semblance of partiality to appear, and he will inform His Majesty so that he may apply suitable remedies.<sup>72</sup>

Frontenac needed little to encourage him to battle with the Jesuits, though it seems that suggestions as to gentleness were more or less lost on him. In 1675 Colbert told him not to meddle with ecclesiastical affairs, but to continue his efforts to reduce the authority of the ecclesiastics, since they troubled the consciences of the people too much. Two years later Duchesneau was ordered to prevent the churchmen from interfering with the royal authority, justice, or the administration of the colony. In 1677 Colbert told the intendant that bishop Laval was a worthy man, but that he affected "an authority a bit too independent of the royal authority," and that Duchesneau must coöperate with Frontenac in seeking to check him. At the same time, Colbert wrote Frontenac that he and the intendant must work together. They were not "to pronounce anything against the episcopal authority directly, but only to prevent by the royal authority that the episcopal should undertake anything outside of the Church in a matter which is purely one of internal order."

In 1678 Colbert rebuked Duchesneau for listening too much to

<sup>71</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 403, 404, 449-52, 537, 559.    <sup>72</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 537.

bishop Laval. He declared the bishop's contention that a priest could not subsist on less than 600 *livres* a year to be ridiculous, "there being more than 4,000 *curés* in the kingdom who do not enjoy more than 200 *livres* of income." Colbert was not wholly successful in his campaign against ecclesiastical authority, but he would have been glad to know that though the Church remained a potent factor in Canadian affairs, no bishop after Laval enjoyed so much prestige or power as he.<sup>73</sup>

*Liquor for the Indians.*—The struggle between the bishop, backed by the Jesuits, against the officials, supported by Colbert, reached its bitterest stage in connection with the liquor traffic.<sup>74</sup> At some times the dispute attained what a contemporary called "unequaled animosity." From the point of view of Colbert and the fur traders, selling liquor to the Indians was a necessity of commerce. From the point of view of the churchmen, it made the Indians unruly and incited them to crimes which endangered their souls and the lives of the French colonists. The difference of opinion and policy was real enough. But the problem became a sort of test case as to the power of church and state. Each side tried to win not only because of the importance of the question, but also to show its own strength. The bishop and his followers prepared long lists of hair-raising and blood-curdling atrocities committed by drunken Indians. Their opponents replied by saying that if the French did not supply the savages with liquor they would take their furs to the Dutch and the English, who were not so scrupulous.

In 1661 Laval, wielding his most trenchant spiritual weapon, excommunicated those engaged in the liquor traffic. The governor, d'Avaugour, agreed to a law which provided the death penalty for those who sold liquor to the Indians. Though he inclined towards mercy in enforcing the law, the trade was somewhat checked. Then d'Avaugour changed his mind and decided to allow the sale of liquor. Laval objected forcefully and went to France to plead his cause. For some time the matter was in abeyance, and the traffic went on.

<sup>73</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 585-89, 621, 623, 632-35; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 371, 461, and *passim*; G. Lanctot, *L'Administration de la Nouvelle France*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>74</sup> On the dispute on the liquor traffic, see the following: "Manuscripts français," No. 13,516, fols. 45 ff., 69 ff., and *passim*; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 246, 385-86, 461-62; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 404-5, 516, 619-21, 622-23, 632-35, 635-37, 641; Scott, *Bishop Laval*, pp. 229-37, and *passim*; Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, I, 58; Le Sueur, *Count Frontenac*, pp. 118-24.

Shortly after his arrival in Canada, Talon came into conflict with Laval on the matter. Talon objected to a fine of 300 *livres*, levied by the Council on a trader who had sold liquor to the savages. Laval thought the trader should have been put to death. Colbert, in his instructions to Bouteroue, in April, 1668, discussed the question from both sides. He said that the bishop and the Jesuits claimed that drinking made the Indians too lazy to hunt, while the chief fur traders insisted that their desire to buy liquor made the Indians hunt much more diligently. Bouteroue was to look into the matter.

In 1672 Colbert approved the abolition of a duty of 10 percent on dry goods taken into Canada and the substitution therefore of a duty of the same amount on liquor. Five years later Colbert delivered his opinion on the whole matter, in a letter to Duchesneau. He remarked that Frontenac did not think the liquor traffic caused all the troubles attributed to it by the bishop, nor did Talon nor Bouteroue, who had written *mémoires* on the subject which he was sending to the intendant. He urged Duchesneau, before siding with the bishop, to investigate the extent of the murder and the arson really caused by brandy. If what the bishop alleged were true, the king would no doubt forbid the traffic. But until proofs were adduced on the matter, in view of the opinions of those who knew Canada well, Colbert ordered Duchesneau to resist the wishes of the bishop, "who to prevent the abuse that a small number of individuals may make of a thing, good in itself, wishes to abolish the traffic in a commodity which is very useful in attracting the trade of the Indians to Christians who are orthodox, such as the French." If no more brandy were sold them, Colbert felt that the Indians would take their trade to the Dutch and the English heretics. If this should happen, there would be no chance of civilizing the savages and converting them to the true faith.

At the same time, Colbert wrote to Frontenac. He said that he thought the facts adduced by the bishop were "greatly exaggerated" and that he was drawing general conclusions from the cases of a few savages. If the disorders were created only by a few savages and if the Indians were "only a little more likely to get drunk than the Germans or . . . the Bretons," Frontenac was to resist the efforts of the bishop. In May, 1678, Colbert told Duchesneau to cease abetting the bishop. According to Colbert, the intendant was "too anxious to follow the opinions of the bishop of Quebec." Duchesneau, in search of a com-

promise, suggested that it be forbidden to give liquor to the savages "in a quantity sufficient to intoxicate them." "You should say at the same time," replied Colbert, "how this term sufficient is to be defined."

A few days later Colbert sent to Duchesneau a *mémoire* on the liquor traffic. It ordered him to summon an assembly of the chief inhabitants to examine the question. It also listed the main arguments pro and con. Against the sale of liquor, it was alleged that the fur traders frequently sold three or four Indians enough brandy for fifteen or twenty men, and that they got terrifically drunk and committed murder, arson, and other crimes. It was suggested that if they were sold only small quantities, the troubles might be stopped. In favor of the liquor traffic, it was declared that no bishop had ever interfered in such matters before; that if crimes were committed, it was for the royal authorities to repress and punish them; that to make the liquor trade a sin in Canada would lead people to ignore the teachings of the Church; that although a few crimes and excesses had been committed by drunken savages, there had not been enough to warrant drastic measures; that this trade was "absolutely necessary to attract the savages into the French colonies and thus to give them the first knowledge of the faith"; and that if the French ceased to sell liquor to the savages, they would take their furs to the English and the Dutch and either become heretics or remain in their own "false and bad religion."

Colbert seems to have put the weight of the argument on the side of those who approved the sale of liquor to the Indians. When the assembly he had suggested met in the fall of 1678, the fur traders, led by La Salle, easily won the day and secured a heavy vote in favor of the continuance of the sale of liquor. But Laval won a partial victory. Back in France he argued with the king, and in May, 1679, Colbert wrote to Duchesneau thus:

The king has had examined to the roots, by Monsieur, the archbishop of Paris, and by the reverend père de la Chaise, confessor of His Majesty, the difficulty concerning intoxicating beverages; they were of the opinion after having conferred with Monsieur the bishop of Quebec, that His Majesty should issue very explicit orders that the French should not take these beverages into the dwelling places of the savages.

I am sending to Monsieur the comte de Frontenac the ordinance which has been issued in conformity with this opinion.

Laval, on the other hand, had to reduce his spiritual prohibitions to the terms of the ordinance. It was therefore legally and ethically cor-

rect, thenceforth, to sell liquor to the Indians who came to the French settlements, but not to take liquor to the Indians in their own villages.<sup>75</sup>

*Population.*—Despite their differing points of view, there was one matter on which bishop Laval and Colbert were in agreement—a desire to increase the population of the colony. Colbert instructed Talon to work for this end. He told Bouteroue that “The increase of the colony should be the rule and end of all the conduct of the intendant,” and added “The intendant must never think he has done his duty well unless he sees an increase of 200 families a year in that country.” He wrote de Courcelle that his most important duty was to increase the number of inhabitants. He directed Frontenac to strive to preserve the people who were in Canada, to increase them, and to attract new colonists.

So interested was Colbert in the matter of the population of Canada that he asked for yearly reports on the number of inhabitants there. He was delighted to hear that 700 children had been baptized in 1671, and that it was predicted that the number would reach 1,100 in 1672. But he was grieved when a census in 1676 showed the number of inhabitants to be less than he expected. The king, he declared, felt that there was some mistake. “There must needs be a greater number,” he declared, and added that the king expected that the next report would be “much more ample.” Though he was similarly distressed by the figures that reached him in 1677, he accepted them as correct.

To increase the population in Canada, Colbert adopted a wide variety of methods. He encouraged marriages, especially youthful ones. In 1668 he told Bouteroue to try in every way to get the boys of the colony married at the age of 18 or 19 years and the girls at 14 or 15. On April 5, 1669, a royal ordinance on the subject was issued. It granted a pension of 300 *livres* a year to parents in Canada who had 10 or 11 living children, and of 400 *livres* to those who had 12. Children who had become priests, nuns, or monks could not be counted. To each boy who married at the age of 20 or under, and to each girl who married at 16 or under, was to be given a gift of 20 *livres*, which was to be called “the present of the king.” Special consideration was to be given to the fathers of large families. Heads of families who had unmarried sons over 20 years old or unmarried daughters over 16 were to be fined.

In 1665, to attract colonists to Canada, Colbert ordered Talon to pre-

<sup>75</sup> See footnote 74 above.

pare at the expense of the king each year thirty or forty habitations for new arrivals. The land was even to be cleared for them and the soil prepared for crops. In 1672 Colbert told Talon and Frontenac to prevent colonists in Canada from returning to France. None was to be allowed to go to France unless he had, in the shape of a home and a family, such ties as were sure to bring him back. This order was, however, to be enforced quietly and tactfully, lest the rumor of it get out and prevent new colonists from going to the colony.

Colbert used more direct methods as well. He was responsible for sending large numbers of colonists to Canada. Perhaps his most successful work in this connection was in the matter of the soldiers who were sent to Canada. In 1665 the Carignan-Salières regiment of 1,000 men and 100 officers was sent thither to protect the inhabitants from the Indians, and 4 companies were brought up from the West Indies as well. Colbert told Talon to endeavor to persuade these soldiers to stay in Canada when their terms of service were up. To each who agreed to do so a "light gratification" was to be given, in name of the king. In 1669 Colbert was delighted to learn that many of the soldiers had decided to stay. At one stroke he had secured for Canada a large batch of colonists, and a body of veteran soldiers who could be called out to defend the country. In 1669, also, Colbert sent out to Canada 6 companies of 50 men each, with a total of 30 gentlemen-officers, to settle in the colony.

Colbert sent out other colonists, men, married couples, bond servants, and families. In Talon's time alone 2,500 new settlers were dispatched from France. But Colbert was particularly interested in sending out girls and young women. There were far more men than women in Canada. If only they could be provided with wives, the population problem would be solved. In 1669 150 girls were shipped off by Colbert. They did not prove entirely suitable as wives for Canadians, since many of them, town-bred and taken from the *Hôpital-général*, were "not robust enough to stand the climate nor the work in the fields." Accordingly Colbert wrote the archbishop of Rouen, in February, 1670, asking him to get his parish priests to find 50 or 60 village girls who would like to go to Canada to get married. The quest seems to have been successful, for in March Colbert wrote that he was preparing to send to Canada "150 girls, geldings, stallions, and sheep." The hundred and fifty prospective wives were duly shipped off, and the husky Norman peasant



girls proved an even more valuable addition to the colony than the livestock. In all, 500 girls were sent out in 1670. Colbert was planning to send 150 more in 1671. Even in 1673, in war-time, he was willing to spend the money necessary to send out 60 girls for the wifeless Canadians.

It was not enough to ship out the girls. They must be married on their arrival. This was not too difficult. Of the 500 sent in 1670, only 15 were unmarried at the end of the year. But such magnificent results were not achieved without a little pressure from the dextrous Talon. In 1671 Colbert wrote him to tell him he had done well to order that bachelors should be deprived of the right to hunt or trade if they did not get married "within 15 days after the arrival of the vessel bringing the girls." "It is very necessary," added Colbert, even in the face of such zeal, "that you strive earnestly not only to see that all those who are in Canada work, but also that they should enter the marriage bonds as soon as they are old enough and as soon as there are enough girls." <sup>78</sup>

Another solution to the problem of finding wives for the colonists, and one that Colbert seems to have adopted without hesitation, was to encourage the colonists to marry Indian women. Race prejudices did not loom large in the seventeenth century. Religion and culture were much more important. If the Indians could be converted to Catholicism and taught to live like the French, they would prove valuable additions to the colony's population and to its productive capacities. What better way to achieve this end than for the Frenchmen to marry native women?

In 1668 Colbert, in his instructions to Bouteroue, wrote:

It has appeared up till now that the maxim of the Jesuits has not been to call the Indians into community of life with the French, either by giving them lands and habitations in common, or by the education of their children and by marriages. Their reason has been that they have believed that they were preserving more purely the principles and the sanctity of our religion by keeping the converted savages in their ordinary form of life than by calling them in among the French. As it is only too easy to see how far this maxim is from all right policy, both for religion and for the state, you must act gently to get them to change it, and you must exert all the temporal

<sup>78</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 394-95, 402, 405, 449-51, 476, 481, 513, 517, 535, 538, 541-42, 557-58, 577, 605-6, 614-19, 657; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, I, 393-95; "Manuscrits français," No. 8028, fols. 127-28 (for ordinance of king encouraging marriages); Guerin, *Feudal Canada*, pp. 39-40; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 54-60; Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, pp. 60-61; Innis (ed.), *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History*, pp. 291-94.

authority to attract the savages in among the French, a thing which can be done by marriages and by the education of their children.<sup>77</sup>

In 1669 Colbert wrote bishop Laval that the king was granting him 6,000 *livres* to aid in his expenses for the year. The king was especially anxious that the money be used for the education of Indian children, "there being nothing more important for the advantage of the colony and the salvation of the savages, which is the chief concern of His Majesty, than to join them to the common life of the French." To the abbé Quelus, a churchman in Canada, Colbert wrote in 1671 to say that the king was very eager to have him work for the education of the Indian children "to render them capable of being admitted into the common life of the French," so that the French and the Indians might "become a single people and thus strengthen the colony by so much." In the same year he gave Talon the following instructions:

Work always, by every sort of means, to encourage the ecclesiastics and churchmen who are in that country to raise among themselves the greatest number of these [Indian] children that is possible, so that being instructed in the maxims of our religion and in our customs, they may compose with the inhabitants of Canada a single people, and thus strengthen that colony.<sup>78</sup>

In 1673 he urged Frontenac to strive "to attract the savages into the society and manner of life of the French." He repeated these instructions the next year, and told Frontenac that it would be better, if, instead of establishing distant missions, the ecclesiastics would devote themselves to an effort to attract the Indians in among the French so that they might "quit their manner of life, in which they can never become good Christians." But Colbert, in pursuing his policy, did not limit himself to words. He was quite ready to appeal to motives of self-interest. A royal bounty of 150 *livres* was established, to be paid to each French colonist who married an Indian woman.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 404; cf. Dollier de Casson, *A History of Montreal*, p. 339.

<sup>78</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 452, 517; cf. Scott, *Bishop Laval*, pp. 257-58.

<sup>79</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 560, 578, 580; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, p. 393.

The encouragement by the French of miscegenation was admired in a later generation by the English. In 1719 an official letter sent to English officials in Nova Scotia contained the following statement: "We are convinced from All the Accounts that We have received from America that nothing has so much contributed to Strengthen the hands of the French in those parts as the Friendship they maintain and the intermarriage they make with the Indians." From 1719 to 1773 the instructions sent to the governors of Nova Scotia included orders to grant bounties for intermarriages between whites and Indians. See Brebner, "Subsidized Intermarriage with Indians," pp. 33-36. It should also be remembered that Patrick Henry in 1784 introduced into the Virginia legislature a bill providing for bounties for marriages between whites and Indians and

Despite Colbert's encouragement of marriage with the Indians, the census figures sent back to France did not include the savages in their enumerations. When Colbert came to power in 1661, there were something like 2,500 French colonists in Canada. In 1666 there were 3,414, according to the reports sent to Colbert. In 1667 there were 4,312. In 1674 there were 6,704. In 1675 there were 7,832. In 1677 there were 8,515. In 1679 there were 9,400. By the time of Colbert's death in 1683, there were well over 10,000 inhabitants in the colony. Colbert was aided in his efforts to build up the population by the well-nigh incredible birthrate that was attained. Put in modern terms, it reached the figure of about 10,000 per 100,000 of the population, for in 1671, with something like 6,000 inhabitants, there were between 600 and 700 births in the colony.<sup>80</sup>

*Land policies and agriculture.*—One of the interesting features of Colbert's Canadian policy is that he not only wished to civilize the Indians, French style, and to increase the number of the French inhabitants, but he wished to have life in the colony as much like that of France as possible. Under Colbert, Canada, with an intendant and a governor, was given a government much like that of a French province. The officials were told to see that the people enjoyed the same "sweetness and tranquillity" as in France. In addition, Colbert sent specific instructions as to how the people were to live. Some of his notions were dictated by the necessity of defense against the Indians. But others seem to have been based on a desire that Canada should be truly a New France overseas.

In 1663 it was ordered that the clearing of land in Canada should henceforth be done in contiguous areas, and that "the habitation should be reduced to the form" of French parishes and French towns, "in so far as possible." But the order was not enforced, since to "reduce the inhabitants into units of villages" would have meant the abandonment of many outlying farms. In 1665 Colbert ordered Talon to bring the inhabitants together into "units of parishes." He suggested, furthermore, a means by which this might be effected. If a colonist had been

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for offspring from such matches. The bill passed two readings and might well have become a law had not Patrick Henry, its sponsor, left the legislature to take the office of governor.

<sup>80</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 443-48, 577, 614-19; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 284-85; Levasseur, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 385; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, p. 395.

granted 500 *arpents* of land and had but 50 under cultivation, 100 might be taken from him and given to a new colonist. For this purpose it was to be decreed that all lands granted must be cleared. If not, one-tenth or one-fifteenth of the land was to be taken back every year.

Three years later Colbert instructed Bouteroue to see that the inhabitants put their dwellings close together and thus created villages and towns. He repeated these instructions in the next year, to a special agent who was sent out. The lands, he insisted, must be cleared in contiguous stretches. Frontenac was given similar orders in 1672. In 1674 Colbert told Frontenac to discourage the colonists from pushing into outlying areas "so distant that they can never be inhabited or possessed by Frenchmen." The ideal was rather to create compact, easily defended settlements. He gave like instructions in the succeeding years. In 1677 he wrote that Jolliet was not to take twenty men to establish a post in Illinois. Canada must be peopled "before thinking of other lands." What Colbert wished was to have the inhabitants a busy, happy, agricultural people, concentrated in villages in well-settled areas, like the peasants of France. In 1679 he told Frontenac not to issue any more hunting licenses without good reason, "it being much more advantageous to the colony that the inhabitants devote themselves to cultivating and clearing the land, rather than hunting, which can never be of any use to the colony."<sup>81</sup>

Colbert's suggestion, in 1665, that land left uncleared be taken back from those to whom it had been granted was aimed not only to aid in the creation of compact settlements, but also to increase the area under cultivation. The West India Company and its predecessors had made recklessly large land grants without proper plan. The right to grant land was withdrawn from the Company and given to Talon. After 1676 it was vested in the governor and the intendant. Some large grants continued to be made. Talon gave extensive *seigneuries* to the officers of the Carignan-Salières regiment. A few untitled nobles received large grants with titles attached to them. Thus along the Saint Lawrence and the Richelieu rivers were created a number of *seigneuries* and manors of a feudal type, where the proprietors granted lands to humbler *habitants*.

<sup>81</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 393-94, 405, 443-45, 536, 578-79, 585-89, 597-98, 618, 639; for some of Talon's ambitious exploration plans and Colbert's discouragement thereof, see Margry (ed.), *Découvertes et établissements des français*, II, 76-78, 82-84, 87, 256-57, 329.

But gradually there was adopted a policy of making the land grants smaller and of endeavoring to see that they were brought under cultivation. In 1672 Talon had an accurate roll of land grants drawn up. In the same year Colbert ordered Talon to enforce the regulations which provided for taking away from the proprietors land which was not cleared and used. Before he returned to France, Talon arranged for the gradual forfeiture of unused lands and made provisions that in the future land grants should be contiguous and of smaller size. In 1676 Colbert ordered Duchesneau to arrange for the withdrawal of uncultivated lands from their proprietors, according to the regulations.

In 1679 a royal decree was issued to enforce this policy. It pointed out that though all the most conveniently located lands in Canada had been already granted, a large part of them had not been brought under cultivation. New settlers were discouraged because the only lands available were situated far from the rivers. The decree provided, therefore, that one-fourth of the lands granted before 1665, and not yet cleared and put under cultivation, were to be forfeited by their owners. Beginning with 1680, one-twentieth of the unused lands previously granted were to be forfeited each year. The lands taken from the owners who had not used them were to be granted to new colonists. Despite such regulations, the forfeitures were not easy to effect. At the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, about 2,000,000 *arpents* of land had been granted. About 50,000 *arpents* were under cultivation.<sup>82</sup>

The energetic Talon himself, in the use of his lands, tried to set an example to the other proprietors in Canada. Of his estate of Les Islets he made a model farm, and the horse-breeding establishment which he set up there enjoyed a considerable success. At royal expense, Talon also created three model villages near Quebec, on land taken from the Jesuits because they had not brought it under cultivation. These villages, which were given the names of Bourg-la-Reine, Bourg-Royal, and Bourg-Talon, were all built on a plan not unlike that of the typical village in France. In the center was placed the church. Around it in a square were placed the houses. Spreading out fanwise from the village was the cultivated land. These villages Talon peopled with workers and disbanded soldiers. To reward the intendant for his labors, the king

<sup>82</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 541, 606-7, 704; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, pp. 387, 398-400; Munro, *The Seigniorial System in Canada*, pp. 34-38.

gave him the three villages. However, after Talon's death his heirs sold them.<sup>83</sup>

It was Talon, too, who was most energetic in endeavoring to secure for Canada an adequate supply of livestock. Not only did he breed horses himself, but also he arranged with Colbert for the importation of cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs from France. In 1665 Colbert suggested that Talon forbid for a space of time the killing of any cattle, calves, sheep, or hogs in the colony, so as to increase the breeding stock. In 1670, as noted above, Colbert sent a shipment of livestock along with the girls he dispatched to Canada. The next year he wrote Talon that 14,000 *livres* of royal funds were being used to buy farm animals to send to the colony. In 1672 he told Frontenac to encourage the raising of livestock and to import animals from Acadia, where there were plenty of them. The efforts to increase the amount of livestock in Canada were successful. Statistics for 1666 showed 2,136 cattle in the colony. By 1679 the number had risen to 6,983. In the latter year there were also in Canada 145 horses, 719 sheep, 33 goats, and 12 donkeys.<sup>84</sup>

*Industry and commerce.*—In addition to encouraging agriculture, Colbert strove to build up manufactures, mining, and fisheries. Almost every letter of instruction he wrote to the Canadian officials contained some remarks on one or another of these topics. Among the things which he hoped Canada could profitably produce were tar, naval stores, lumber, and potash. He took steps for the preservation of the forests, and in the land grants that were made oak trees were reserved for royal use. As early as 1665, Colbert sent four expert tar-makers to Canada.

In 1671 he encouraged Talon in his efforts to establish the manufacture of tar. In 1674 he gave orders to stimulate the production of tar, and to aid a certain sieur Follin who was trying to establish the making of potash. In 1679 he was still urging that the production of tar and potash be encouraged.

From the first days of the exploration of Canada, high hopes had existed in the minds of the French that great mineral wealth might be found there. Colbert was the heir of these expectations, but he centered his interest in such plebian metals as iron and copper, rather than in

<sup>83</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 517; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, pp. 398-400; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, p. 128.

<sup>84</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 396, 443-48, 481, 517, 536-37, 606; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, p. 387; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, p. 60.

gold and silver. In 1665 he told Talon to open up mines of lead, copper, and iron, which were reported to be abundant in Canada. In 1668 he instructed Bouteroue to institute a search for coal and iron mines and to develop them when they were discovered. The next year he ordered that efforts be made to open up an iron mine. In 1671 he heartily approved of sending out La Salle to seek the copper mine that had been reported by the Indians. In 1672 he again wrote to Talon of the desirability of opening up mines of copper, lead, iron, and coal. In the same year he urged Frontenac to establish iron furnaces and forges in Canada, so as to make use of the local wood supplies and "to send us all the iron that we get from Sweden and other countries of the North." He even told Talon at that time that it would be no great loss if the fur trade stopped altogether, since then the colonists would be forced to occupy themselves with manufactures, fisheries, and the search for mines.

In the letter in which he gave Talon permission to come home, Colbert wrote, "It would be a great advantage and a great satisfaction to the king, if, on your return, you should bring to his Majesty the news of some good mines discovered and manufactures established." He told Frontenac, in 1673, to encourage the search for mines. He repeated the injunction to Duchesneau and to other officials at later dates. Despite the orders of Colbert, and though Talon was able to establish some iron forges, the mineral production of Canada remained insignificant for many years.

Colbert was almost as insistent on the establishment of manufactures as he was in the matter of forest and mineral products. In 1665, in his instructions to Talon, he said, "One of the greatest needs of Canada is to establish there manufactures, and to attract there the artisans for the things of everyday use; up till now it has been necessary to take to that country the cloth to clothe the inhabitants and even the shoes for them to wear." Contrary to the strictest mercantilist principles, Colbert encouraged Talon to introduce hemp and flax growing, sheep raising, wool spinning, weaving, and leather tanning, that the colonists might make their own articles of apparel. In this effort Talon was reasonably successful. In addition he founded a brewery, in order to provide beer for the inhabitants. But when Talon suggested the introduction of tobacco raising, Colbert replied that the colony had much greater need of the establishment of commerce, fisheries, and manu-

factures, and that "the culture of this herb would be harmful to the islands of America."

Again and again Colbert told Talon, Bouteroue, Frontenac, and Duchesneau to aid in the establishment of manufactures. But by 1677 he seemed resigned to the fact that the introduction of manufactures was going to be a slow process. In that year he wrote Duchesneau that while the manufacture of coarse cloth and the tanning of leather would be very advantageous to the colony, they would be established only with the increase of the number of people in Canada and a consequent growth in their needs. Duchesneau was merely to watch and help anyone who wished to found such enterprises.

Colbert was also anxious to establish fisheries in Canada. He instructed Bouteroue to aid the people to carry on fishing in the Saint Lawrence and to encourage them to send the fish to France. In a *mémoire* to Frontenac he elaborated this suggestion. If the colonists would establish important fisheries in the Saint Lawrence, they could ship the fish to France and the French West Indies. The latter trade would be particularly advantageous, for a vessel from Canada could take lumber and fish to the West Indies, secure a cargo of sugar there, take it to France, and get a load of French goods to bring back to Canada. Duchesneau also received repeated instructions to build up the fisheries in Canada.<sup>85</sup>

One of the ideas for Canada dearest to Colbert's heart was that it should become a shipbuilding center. He had heard reports of its immense timber resources, and he felt that they could be most advantageously used to make ships. In his instructions to Talon in 1665, he spoke of what he heard from Canada of the "great quantity of wood suitable for all sorts of uses and even for the construction of all parts of a ship," and of the "trees of the size and height necessary for masts." He called this wealth of timber "a treasure that must be carefully preserved," and added, "Since one might in time set up yards to build ships for the king, it will be well to prevent the felling of the finest wood when new clearings are made."

<sup>85</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 395, 403, 447, 516-17, 536, 540, 541, 542, 560, 579, 618, 640; Wrong, *Rise and Fall of New France*, pp. 387, 398; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 693-94; "Manuscrits français," No. 8028, fol. 108; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 51-53, 123-24; Margry (ed.), *Découvertes et établissements des français*, II, 81; Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français*, I, 4-5, 20-21, 31-32, 40-47; II, 308 ff., 330-39, 380 ff., 447 ff., and *passim*.



Colbert told Talon to encourage the colonists to build ships, and he repeated these injunctions from time to time. In 1669, through Colbert de Terron, he dispatched to Canada a foreman, five carpenters, and other workers, to assist in building ships there. Not only were these shipbuilders sent out, but their salaries were paid by the king. With Talon's aid, shipbuilding was actually begun and gradually grew more and more important. By 1671 a number of small vessels had been constructed. In that year Colbert arranged to offer royal bounties for all ships built in Canada. But at the same time he took steps to see that such vessels should not break the French monopoly of trade with the colonies. A royal ordinance of July 18, 1671, forbade the owners of ships built in Canada to use them or to allow them to be used for trade to any foreign territory.<sup>86</sup>

Colbert, as has been indicated above, was especially anxious to encourage trade, particularly between Canada and the West Indies. He repeatedly issued instructions to that effect to officials in Canada. But though Talon worked hard on the matter and actually dispatched, in 1670, to the West Indies, three vessels built in Canada, the trade between the two portions of the American empire of France grew very slowly. Another, and a more fantastic, dream of Colbert was doomed also to disappointment, for in 1671 and 1672 he encouraged the search for a passage leading from the Atlantic to the South Sea. Nothing, he wrote, could be more important for Canada than the discovery of such a waterway.

In other and more practical ways Colbert sought to aid Canadian commerce. In 1669 he announced that the monopoly of Canadian trade granted to the West India Company had been abolished. Commerce with the colony was to be open to all French merchants. This step, he felt, would be of great assistance to the colony. "This liberty," he said, ought to "contribute greatly to interest" the colonists in commerce, which would "bring plenty to the country, and, through plenty, a great number of people." But after the abolition of the company's monopoly, it still preserved rights over Canadian trade, and with the dissolution of the company these rights were transferred to the *domaine d'Occident*. In 1669 Colbert, to encourage the Canadian colonists to engage in

<sup>86</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 396, 447, 536, 541; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises*, I, 227-28; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françoises*, XVIII, 336; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 50-51, 122-123; Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada*, I, 222-36.

commerce, reduced the duty on codfish brought by them to France. He similarly reduced the duty on coal brought from Canada to France, since he had heard that two mines were to be opened up there. To protect private merchants from what might be called official competition, Colbert endeavored, without much success, to prevent government officers in the colony from engaging in trade. Colbert was anxious that goods, rather than money, be sent to Canada from France. In 1672 he announced that the king was going to have some special money made and sent out to the colony. But five years later he was shocked by the suggestion that 90,000 *livres* be sent to the colony. If the inhabitants needed money, he declared, they must attract it by hard work and by their commerce.<sup>87</sup>

Peculiarly enough, Colbert did not esteem highly the fur trade, the one kind of commerce that was really important to Canada. When he announced the end of the West India Company's monopoly to de Courcelle in 1669, he remarked that the colonists must find other commodities than furs to sell, since there was an oversupply of them in France and the French merchants might soon grow weary of fetching them from Canada. In the same year he wrote that all the inhabitants of Canada neglected the cultivation of the land, to compete with each other in buying furs. This merely served, he declared, to raise the prices paid to the Indians. At the same time, however, he was contemplating, at least, making the fur trade into some sort of royal monopoly. After the rights of the West India Company were turned over to the *domaine d'Occident* in 1674, an effort was made to fix the price of furs, and to see that the officials of the *domaine* collected the furs and the fees due to it. The result was a series of disputes with the fur-trading colonists, which were not settled until the very end of the century.

One of the features of the fur trade that appealed least to Colbert was the existence of the *coureurs des bois*. Colonists were supposed to settle down in villages and cultivate the land, not to go dashing around in the forests, living like savages, and seeking to buy furs. In 1673 Colbert told Frontenac to prevent the inhabitants from going off into the forests to hunt or to trade. Two years later he gave orders that the *coureurs des bois* were to be arrested and punished severely. In 1676 he instructed Duchesneau to stop private trade with the Indians. He

<sup>87</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 449, 452, 512, 516-17, 536, 541, 560, 607-8, 617; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1641, decree of April 16, 1669; Chapais, *The Great Intendant*, pp. 50-51; Innis (ed.), *Select Documents*, pp. 320-325; Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada*, I, 233.

approved the action of the council of Quebec by which individuals were forbidden to go off in search of Indians with furs, but were made to wait until the savages brought their peltry to Quebec, Montreal, or Trois Rivières. Royal enactments of 1676 and 1678 provided severe penalties against *coureurs des bois* and forbade the colonists to hunt farther than a league away from the settlements. In 1681 an amnesty was offered to such *coureurs des bois* as were willing to return to a settled life. In that year Colbert also modified the restrictions by allowing Duchesneau to issue permits for twenty-five canoes, with three men each, to go to trade with the Indians in the back country. But to prevent anyone from becoming a *coureur des bois*, no man was to receive such a permit in two successive years. At the same time Colbert instructed Frontenac to strive to attract the Indians to bring their furs to the fairs at Montreal and the other towns. He ordered Frontenac, moreover, to whip and brand anyone caught carrying on illicit trade with the Indians. For a second offense such traders were to be sent to the galleys for life.<sup>88</sup>

*Summary.*—It proved impossible to eliminate the *coureur des bois*, for he was a natural outgrowth of the transplantation of the French into Canadian surroundings. In many other respects Colbert's plans for Canada were modified by the Canadian environment, which he did not understand too clearly. Canada, after all, was not Touraine. Yet it cannot be denied that Colbert was greatly instrumental in building up and strengthening the colony, and that he helped to lay the foundations for the greater French Canada that was to be.

For Acadia, Colbert accomplished little. Though it was returned to France by the treaty of Breda (1667), the French did not actually take it over from the English till 1670. Colbert was anxious to build up Acadian resources. Talon projected a road that would bind Acadia to Canada. A monopolistic company was organized in 1682 to exploit the Acadian fisheries. But under a series of undistinguished governors, the colony made relatively little progress. The population which was about 400 in 1671 rose to about 800 by the time of Colbert's death, but even in 1700, when the English definitely captured it, its people numbered only about 1,500.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 447, 449, 558, 580, 589, 606-7, 614-19, 645-47; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, p. 256; Margry (ed.), *Découvertes et établissements des français*, IV, 4.

<sup>89</sup> Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, I, 206-24; Brebner, *New England's Outpost*, pp. 35-46.

## 4. THE COMPANY OF THE NORTH

While both the East India Company and the West India Company were involved in colonial as well as commercial enterprises, the third of Colbert's great companies was formed for purposes more exclusively commercial. From the time he took office, Colbert displayed special interest in the trade between France and northern Europe, since, though it was based largely on French products, it was almost entirely in the hands of other nations, and since for the Dutch, at least, it was proving very lucrative. Savary expressed Colbert's point of view with a good deal of accuracy when in 1675 he wrote:

It is not to be doubted that if the French wished to devote themselves seriously to carrying on trade with the North they could do it as advantageously as the Dutch and the English, since the bulk of the goods that are taken there comes from France, and those that are bought there for the return voyages are sold and consumed in France. . . . Why, therefore, do not the French secure for themselves the profit from this advantage, without using foreigners as intermediaries for the sale of their goods and the purchase of those which they need?

Truly it is a great disgrace to our nation, which in everything except commerce is so brave and enterprising, because it may be said without exaggeration that there is no nation on earth more capable of great enterprises in commerce than the French, if they wished to take the trouble.

In 1661 the trade from the Baltic area to the rest of Europe was of considerable proportions. Through the Danish Sound annually passed some thousand vessels. Most of them, about three-quarters of the total, were Dutch ships of small or medium size, manned by crews of only ten or twelve men. During the course of years the Dutch had built up especially good facilities for the Baltic carrying trade. They had ample capital, capacious warehouses, a sound insurance system. In every important Baltic port there was a little Dutch colony of merchants, agents, and factors. In the Baltic trade the most acceptable currency was rix dollars, minted in Holland.

Though the Dutch enjoyed almost a monopoly of the Baltic trade in 1661, French ships had frequently in the past engaged in that commerce. Francis I had made trade agreements with Sweden and Denmark. In times of famine, French ships had hurried to the great grain port of Danzig. In the famine of 1608, for example, a hundred French ships had gone thither. When Richelieu, in 1629, had sent Deshayes to the North to negotiate commercial treaties, it had seemed momentarily as

if the French were to gain an important share in the Baltic trade. In 1631 seventy-two French ships passed through the Sound. Though some of them had gone to seek grain to supplement a poor French crop, still in 1632 forty French ships had likewise gone through the Sound. This promising beginning was cut short by the French participation in the Thirty Years' War. French trade to the Baltic dwindled rapidly. But an interest in the area was kept alive in France.<sup>90</sup>

*Preliminary steps.*—When Colbert came to power one of the first matters to which he turned his attention was the trade with northern Europe. In 1661 he persuaded the Council of State to agree to send three ships to the Baltic to secure naval stores and munitions. In 1662 three vessels with salt, brandy, and money aboard were actually dispatched, and an agent, named de Courtin, was sent to Hamburg, whence he wrote Colbert voluminous letters to give him information on the Baltic trade. In a missive of May 20, 1662, Courtin assured the minister that the French by trading directly with the northern countries could secure goods much more reasonably than through the Dutch. At about this time a merchant of Rouen, Jean (or Johan) Rasse, proposed a company to trade with Russia via Archangel. Colbert promised to support the venture. In 1663 a merchant named Deslandes tried to start such trade, but secured no profits from his efforts. In 1664 Rasse was able to form his Muscovy Company. Some interest in it was manifested in Rouen, which was to be its center, though merchants of other seaports, such as Dieppe, were to be admitted. In June Rasse was considering the advisability of summoning meetings of merchants, as was being done for the East India Company. At the time, its proponent had high hopes for the company. He applied for a grant of royal privileges, and wrote to a correspondent, "I do not doubt at all but that Monseigneur Colbert will be so good as to show His Majesty that the whole affair will be for the good of this kingdom; which makes us hope that the company will obtain from His Majesty all reasonable things." But the Muscovy Company came to nothing, though in 1681 the pertinacious Rasse was still trying to rouse interest in trade with Russia.<sup>91</sup>

In 1662 and 1663 Colbert secured *mémoires* on the northern trade

<sup>90</sup> J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 107, and *passim*; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie de commerce du Nord*, pp. 16-29.

<sup>91</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 31-34; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 108, fols. 660-63, and *passim*; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 121, fol. 351; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 123 *bis*, fols. 667-68.

from merchants of Rouen and Dieppe, made treaties with Denmark and Sweden, and formed a comprehensive plan for trade with the North Atlantic, the White Sea, and the Baltic areas. Through an agent, de Clerville, intendant-general of fortifications, who was at the moment making a survey of French ports and shipping, Colbert sought to encourage the merchants of Havre, Rouen, Dieppe, Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk to start a company for trade to the North. He was particularly anxious that they take thither sugar and tobacco from the West Indies. In October, 1663, he received from an agent named Nacquart the encouraging report that during the course of the year ten ships had sailed from Calais to the North. But Nacquart added that they were going mainly to get planks and lumber and that the prices for such goods were very low.

In 1664 Colbert discussed the matter of northern trade in the Council of State. A mission was sent to the North, to aid French commerce in that area. On December 5 a royal decree offered a bounty of 2 *livres* per ton to any ships that would engage in the trade to Norway or the Baltic ports, bring back a cargo of naval stores, and fulfill certain other requirements such as the presentation of a report of its voyage. Somewhat earlier in the year Colbert considered the formation of a company for the northern commerce. He sent de Clerville to sound out merchants who might be interested. But though Colbert himself, and important merchants like Fermanel and the Formonts at his behest, brought pressure on various business men, no enthusiasm for the project could be aroused. Indeed the merchants of Rouen said they were opposed to all companies save those for colonization, and added that they thought "the French genius not so well suited to companies as that of the Dutch and the English."<sup>92</sup>

Undiscouraged, Colbert continued his efforts in behalf of French trade to the North. Pocquelin, one of the Parisian merchants most closely connected with Colbert, urged his relatives in Rouen to engage in the northern trade. Pierre Formont, one of the most important merchants of the day, established agents in the Baltic ports, who were later to prove of use to the Company of the North. Colbert, through intermediaries, tried, without much success, to awaken in the business men of seaport towns such as Dieppe, Dunkirk, and Bordeaux an interest in

<sup>92</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 35-38; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 117, fols. 509-10; Hauterive and Cussy, *Recueil des traités de commerce*, I, 270-303; III, 303-11.

commerce with northern Europe. The treaty of 1663 with Denmark assured France a favored position in the matter of the Sound dues. Purchases in the northern countries of naval stores, munitions, and cannon for the French navy increased trade between the Baltic area and France. The number of Swedish ships bound for France, passing through the Sound, rose rapidly. There were 14 such vessels in 1664, 30 in 1667, and the number continued large till Sweden became embroiled in war in 1675. Encouraged by the bounties of 1664, by the establishment or reestablishment of French consuls in Danzig, Poland, Prussia, and Courland, and by favorable treaties which were negotiated with the Hanseatic cities, the French merchants began to send a few ships to the Baltic. In 1665 20 French ships passed through the Sound. In 1666, out of 53 ships direct from France passing the post of Elsinore, where the Sound dues were collected, 12 were French. But in 1667 only 6 French ships passed Elsinore. In 1668 out of 200 ships going from the Baltic to France, 111 were Dutch.

Discouraged by his comparative lack of success with trade from ports such as Dieppe, Calais, and Dunkirk, Colbert began to turn his attention to those farther south, such as Bordeaux and La Rochelle, whence much wine and brandy was shipped to the Baltic area. In 1666 he even considered a proposition whereby two Dutchmen, named Oeillart and Tradel, would have brought a number of Dutch families to France and, in return for certain privileges, would have established trade to the North. In 1667 a merchant of La Rochelle, Henri Tersmitten by name, offered to build up direct trade with Sweden. He was in touch with the Moma brothers, leading merchants of Stockholm, who controlled the island of Gothland, an important commercial entrepôt. Tersmitten suggested that the Swedish merchants be allowed to establish agencies and warehouses at La Rochelle, Bordeaux, and Dunkirk, and that the French do the same at Landscrona and Göteborg. The Swedes wished to secure from the French, capital to cover their outlays. It was proposed that the French make such advances in the shape of salt. During 1668 and early in 1669 de Clermont and another agent of Colbert, named Dumas, organized a small fleet of ships to go to the Baltic. But already Colbert's plans for the creation of a company were under way and superseded all other proposals and enterprises.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 38-55; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 142 bis, fols. 766-69.

Before the company was definitely organized, Colbert had made elaborate preparations. He had, for instance, secured the services of a certain merchant, apparently a Dutchman, who was located in Moscow. His name was Goossens (or Goossen). To this agent Colbert wrote in May, 1669, that he was glad to learn of his return to Moscow, that he was to correspond with Frémont, one of those interested in the company, and that the king would reward his services. After he received this epistle and another which he termed a "noble, high, esteemed, and agreeable letter" from one of the members of the company, probably Frémont, Goossens sent in a long *mémoire* on Russian commerce. He urged trade via Archangel rather than Riga, where the Swedes levied heavy tolls. He suggested sending an ambassador to Russia, to secure favorable treatment, especially a reduction of the duties on wine. He remarked that at least one-third of each cargo should be in rix dollars. He thought it would be unnecessary to send to Archangel cargoes worth as much as 1,000,000 *livres*, as he had been told Colbert stood ready to do. He felt that the company should have an agent at Amsterdam who knew the Russian trade, and proposed Conrad Klinek for the post. In addition to money, Goossens said that the cargoes sent to Russia should include cloth, both plain and fine, paper, beaver skins, wine, brandy, indigo, gold thread, pearls, olive oil, and prunes. In return would be sent from Russia hides, furs, potash, whale oil, and other goods.<sup>94</sup>

*Organization of the company.*—While Goossens, at Moscow, was laying plans for the trade with Russia, Colbert and his various aides were busy organizing the Company of the North. Because of their poor response to the earlier efforts, the Channel ports were more or less ignored. La Rochelle, a center for the export of wine, brandy, and salt, was chosen to be the chief port for the company. A drive for membership and subscriptions to the company was inaugurated. At Paris the Formonts, long engaged in the northern trade, were easily persuaded to join and to subscribe. Colbert was confident that the subscriptions from Paris would total 300,000 *livres*. One of the most energetic agents in trying to sell the stock was Claude Pellot, intendant of Guyenne. He had been told to concentrate on the town of Bordeaux, but he extended his activities to Agen, Montauban, Bergerac, and other

<sup>94</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fol. 100; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 153, fols. 1-7.



places. He held meetings, wrote letters, and brought pressure to bear on wealthy merchants. Early in 1669 he was hoping to raise 150,000 *livres*, but by April his confidence was waning somewhat. Both Colbert and Pellot had felt that they could count on subscriptions from Bayonne, Libourne, and Saint-Jean-de-Luz. In January, 1669, Pellot had written the municipal officials of those towns a letter, in which he described the future of the company and its profits in golden terms. From Bayonne the town officials wrote back that they had felt sure that the people of the place would flock to the support of so worthy an enterprise. But to their surprise, they had been informed that business was bad, the resources of the town exhausted, and the merchants unable to subscribe to the company.

In the end, it was upon Bordeaux that Pellot exerted the most consistent pressure. In January, 1669, he set Lombard, a commissioner of the marine, to work to get subscriptions from that town. Pellot himself took up the task in February. He decided to exploit the division between the *anciens bourgeois* of the city and those who did not enjoy that privileged status. A number of French merchants and many foreign ones—Dutch, English, and Portuguese—established at Bordeaux, regarded with envy the *anciens bourgeois*, who alone had the right to hold municipal offices and who enjoyed partial exemption from certain taxes, such as the *comptable* on goods imported and exported. Lombard suggested that a number of the envious unprivileged might be persuaded to join the company by holding out hopes that they might secure some of the coveted exemptions.

In March Pellot wrote Colbert that a number of merchants were willing to enter the company, but wished to do so under assumed names and without insisting on their rights as members. Colbert replied that it was unnecessary to quibble over forms and formalities. In April Pellot reported that two rich merchants, named Dejean and Duribaut, were unwilling to subscribe. They were both anxious to secure the status of nobles. But Pellot said he stood ready to prevent them from gaining such status unless they subscribed 3,000 *livres* each. He also remarked that since Dejean was a local director of the East India Company, Colbert might send on a letter putting him out of office and appointing a man named Mercier to the post. Pellot could use this letter to force Dejean to subscribe. In the end Duribaut at least did subscribe to the company. But, like a number of others, he did so under an assumed

name, because he claimed to have made "many enemies" when he bought East India Company stock, because he feared to be held financially responsible if the Company of the North got into difficulties, and because those with whom he did business abroad (probably the Dutch) had written him that if he joined the company they would no longer have confidence in him.

Pellot showed considerable ingenuity in thinking up ways of bringing pressure to bear on the various businessmen. There was a banker named Chanevas, who from small beginnings had risen to considerable wealth and had amassed a fortune of about 500,000 *livres*. He held a position in the postal service which he was anxious to retain. Pellot suggested to Colbert that if Louvois, who had charge of the posts, wrote to Chanevas, the latter might be persuaded to put in 6,000 *livres* or 8,000 *livres*, instead of the paltry 2,000 *livres* which he was planning to invest. Pellot likewise told of some Portuguese Jews, who, although they professed to be Catholics, clung to their ancestral religion. He said he would "have them watched" until they joined the company. Pellot further claimed that if no merchant were allowed to enjoy the privileges of a bourgeois unless he invested 1,000 *livres* in the company, 300,000 *livres* in subscriptions would be quickly secured. On April 15, 1669, he sent Colbert a project for a decree to put this last proposal into effect.

During May and June, under this sort of persuasion, the merchants of Bordeaux began to subscribe. The Portuguese Jews of whom Pellot had written decided that it would be wise to invest 10,000 *livres*. On June 3 Pellot's project of a decree was adopted by the Council of State. This assured enough subscriptions so that it was possible to go ahead and give the Company a definitive organization. At La Rochelle, meanwhile, subscriptions were also coming in. Tersmitten, a merchant who had long been interested in the northern trade, gave his enthusiastic support to the company and secured the adherence of other La Rochelle shipowners, like Jean Raulé and the brothers Pagès. Colbert de Terron, because of the dependence of La Rochelle on government and naval orders and contracts, was able to secure a number of subscriptions.

In April, 1669, Tersmitten and the Pagès brothers, with the backing of Colbert de Terron, went to Paris to urge Colbert to grant to the company the export bounties and the reduction of import duties which

they felt were necessary to its success. They objected, on the other hand, to the employment of the relatives whom Formont had established as agents in various Baltic ports. As Formont had promised to invest 100,000 *livres* in the company, the matter was serious. But Colbert told his cousin, Colbert de Terron, to reconcile Tersmitten and the Pagès brothers on this point. By May the way seemed to be clear, and final plans for the company were drawn up. In June, 1669, the royal edict establishing the Company of the North was issued.<sup>95</sup>

The preamble to the edict read:

Since commerce is the most proper means to conciliate the different nations and to maintain the most opposite spirits in a good and friendly relationship, since it brings in and spreads about wealth by the most innocent means, makes people happy and states most prosperous, therefore have we omitted nothing which depended on our authority and our care to make our subjects apply themselves to it and carry it on with the most distant nations; and since that of the North can produce great and reciprocal advantages, we have thought it proper to stimulate our subjects to associate themselves to undertake it and to grant them by this edict considerable favors and privileges; for these reasons we have established a company which shall be called that of the North.

In eleven articles the edict proceeded to grant to the company certain privileges: Beginning July 1, 1669, the company was to have the right to trade in all freedom with Holland, Germany, the Baltic area, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Muscovy, and other northern countries. Any Frenchmen could join the company (without impairing his status if he were a noble) by investing 2,000 *livres* or more. To the company was to be paid, through a remission of duties, 3 *livres* on each *barrique* of brandy exported, and 4 *livres* on each ton of other goods imported or exported. The company was to be exempted from all transit dues and duties on munitions and provisions for its ships. Naval stores brought back from the North by the company could be stored in royal warehouses and arsenals and sold from there by royal officials. Foreign sailors working for the company were to receive naturalization after six years' service. Directors were to be exempted from such local duties as the lodging of soldiers and town watch and ward. Foreign carpenters and artisans employed by the company were to enjoy the same rights as French workers. Shares in the company were to be transferable. The

<sup>95</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 56 ff.; Deping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 412-19.

king was to supply one-third of the capital as a loan without interest, and upon the sums advanced by him were to fall all losses incurred in the first six years. The king was to provide escorts and protection for the ships of the company.<sup>96</sup>

In addition to supplying one-third of the capital, the king invested in the company 150,000 *livres* in the name of Bellinzani, when the merchants of Bordeaux, despite the pressure put on them, proved reluctant to subscribe. In Paris, the central board of directors was formed. It included the Protestant banker Pierre Formont, one of the largest stockholders, whose relatives were strategically located in the North to assist the company, for his brother Nicolas was commissioner to the king of Denmark and to the elector of Hanover, his brothers Jean and Daniel were located in Danzig and Königsberg, while his brothers-in-law, François Dupré and Pierre Dupré, were at Hamburg and Amsterdam. On the board, also, were Nicolas Frémont d'Auneil, a relative of the duc de Saint-Simon; Bellinzani, the factotum of Colbert, and Jean Baptiste de Lagny, an inspector of gunpowder and saltpeter, who acted as an intermediary between the Paris directors and those at La Rochelle—for, with the example of the Dutch East India Company ever in mind, a Chamber of Direction, or local board of directors, was formed at La Rochelle.

The local board there included Louis Pagès, who belonged to an important Protestant, shipowning family, and his brother Samuel, who had married the daughter of a wealthy paper merchant of Angoulême. The same family was also represented on the board by Theodore Pagès, a nephew of the two brothers, and the future son-in-law of still another board member, Henri Tersmitten. From Bremen, Tersmitten had come to La Rochelle and settled there in 1660. He had married the daughter of a Protestant merchant and had become the proprietor of a sugar refinery. Another member of the La Rochelle board was Jean Raulé, a shipowner of Dutch birth. Through Formont, in Paris, and the local board of directors at La Rochelle, the new company was well equipped with correspondents abroad who could aid its business. The Protestant tone of this company, organized under royal auspices just sixteen years before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was worthy of remark. It had been planned originally that Bordeaux should also have a local

<sup>96</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, pp. 460–61; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 71–73; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,738, fol. 210.

board of directors. But when that city subscribed less than had been expected, the idea was abandoned.<sup>97</sup>

At the start Colbert had elaborated schemes for coöperation among the companies that he had created. The Company of the North was to supply the East India Company and the West India Company with the naval stores and northern products that they needed. The West India Company was to provide the Company of the North with sugar, to be sold in the Baltic area. The Company of the Pyrenees was to supply the Company of the North with wood with which to build ships.

The West India Company was not especially enthusiastic about the idea. But in December, 1670, stimulated by Colbert, it reached an agreement with the Company of the North. Colbert wrote the directors to congratulate them on the agreement and on their decision to refine sugar to sell to northern Europe. Three weeks later he sent them another letter, explaining that the rebates of duties had been so arranged as to make it very advantageous for them to export refined sugar but not raw sugar. If they wished to export raw sugar, they could do so only after paying import and export duties in France. Though the Company of the North seems to have sold some wood and naval stores to the West India Company, it was never able to establish an extensive trade in sugar or other colonial products with the North.<sup>98</sup>

Another plan which Colbert worked out for the Company of the North had to do with Spain and Portugal. These countries bought large amounts of wood and naval stores in northern Europe and sent thither cargoes of wine and salt. Colbert hoped that the company might replace the Dutch in carrying these goods to the Iberian countries and that it might sell them there for cash, which could be brought to France and used to purchase French wine and French salt to be sent to the North. In December, 1669, Colbert de Terron established at Lisbon a marine storehouse to be used in this trade. In 1670 the directors drew up plans for the establishment of a similar entrepôt at Cadiz. Colbert approved the project and wrote to the French ambassador and consuls in Spain about it. The company did actually manage to send some goods to the storehouse at Lisbon, but it had so much difficulty in getting sufficient

<sup>97</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 73-76; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 417-19; Boissonnade, *Histoire . . . de relations économiques . . . entre la France et l'état prussien*, pp. 432-40.

<sup>98</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 77-78; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 530-31, 579-80, 592-93, 597-98.

goods even to supply the demands in France that it could devote little energy to the effort to wrest from the Dutch the carrying trade between Spain and Portugal and the North.<sup>99</sup>

A third plan for the Company of the North entertained by Colbert was the inauguration of trade between France and Russia. He had been interested in the attempts to found a Muscovy Company; he had corresponded with Goossens, in Moscow, while the Company of the North was being formed. In February, 1671, he was trying to secure a copy of the commercial treaty between Holland and the "Prince of Muscovy," urging the company to send a ship to Archangel, and planning to dispatch a French ambassador to Moscow to secure a favorable commercial agreement. Toward the end of the month he received the *mémoires* he wished from Pomponne, the ambassador of France in Holland, and wrote him of the plan for the Company of the North to start trading with Russia. But in March he wrote to Pomponne that the company would be unable to send a ship to Russia that year. It must first devote itself to building up trade with nearer countries. The matter was allowed to drop, and Russia was not brought within the ambit of French trade.<sup>100</sup>

Despite Colbert's various projects, he intended from the first that basic trade of the company should be the bringing of naval stores and other goods from the North, and the sending thither of French wine, brandy and salt. He was trying to make France self-sufficient in the matter of wood and naval stores. But until it had become so, he wished that such of these goods as had to be imported should be brought directly from the countries which produced them. He stood ready to support the company of the North by purchasing naval stores and wood from it for the navy. In June, 1669, Colbert de Terron, with Colbert's approval, agreed to purchase wood from the company for the construction of naval vessels. In January, 1671, Colbert even promised the directors that during the course of the year he would purchase imported masts and naval stores for the navy only from the company.<sup>101</sup>

*Activities of the company.*—It was thus to a fairly narrow field that the company's operations were restricted in practice. The company be-

<sup>99</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 78-80; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 558; III<sup>e</sup>, 494-95.

<sup>100</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, p. 80; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 605-6, 609, 617-18.

<sup>101</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 598; III<sup>e</sup>, 132-33.

gan operations late in 1669. The king advanced to it 100,000 *livres* in September, 1669, and the same amount in March, 1670. At the end of its first voyage, Colbert congratulated the company that it had suffered no loss. Despite the fact that in 1670 the company received, largely from the government, orders for goods totaling 1,000,000 *livres*, it was soon in debt, since business conditions were bad and trade was hampered by the acute commercial rivalry with Holland. By March, 1671, the company had spent all its capital and was begging Colbert for advances on the goods it was to supply. Colbert, however, replied that it should still have left 140,000 *livres* in cash. He insisted that though they figured the sums put into their hands by the king at 549,088 *livres*, the king had actually advanced to them 686,000 *livres*. During this period, none the less, Colbert was confident of the ultimate success of the company. He approved the sending of agents to Norway and Danzig. He even considered the formation at Bordeaux of a complementary company, to assist the Company of the North in its commerce, despite his unsatisfactory experiences with the merchants of that city.<sup>102</sup>

The nucleus of the fleet which the Company of the North tried to create were the ships belonging to Formont, Tersmitten, and the Pagès family. The number of these vessels was somewhat reduced when two of Tersmitten's vessels were ship-wrecked and one of the Pagès' ships, loaded with Negroes, was captured by pirates off Cape Verde in 1669. Frémont assisted the company by turning over to it two ships. By 1670 the company was possessed of about ten vessels. To avoid the necessity of buying ships abroad, Colbert got the directors at La Rochelle to set up there a shipyard. To train the French workers, Colbert imported a Dutch master carpenter and twelve journeymen. In 1671 and the following years the company built for itself "Le Chat" (260 tons), "Les Armes de la Compagnie du Nord" (400 tons), "La Charente" (150 tons), "La Chevette" (150 tons), and "Le Saint-Louis" (450 tons).

During 1669 the company sent a ship loaded with salt to the Baltic, and another went North to get a cargo of wood. Though Colbert disapproved, ships were sent to Amsterdam with salt, through the sale of which it was planned to raise money to buy ships and goods. In addi-

<sup>102</sup> Guiffrey, *Comptes des bâtiments du roi sous le règne de Louis XIV*, I, 1386-87; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 81-83; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 508-9, 617.

tion, cargoes were placed on a number of Swedish vessels, which were expected to bring back masts. During the course of the year Colbert began to reduce his orders for naval stores to his old agents in the Baltic region, since he planned to purchase them through the company. To injure the company, the Dutch brought large quantities of such goods to La Rochelle and offered them at low prices.

In January, 1670, Colbert wrote to the directors at La Rochelle to encourage them to build their own ships, so that they might dispense with the services of foreign vessels. He approved the prices at which they had agreed with Colbert de Terron to supply the navy with goods, though he thought they were charging too much for copper. He told them to work hard to establish the exchange of goods for goods with Sweden, rather than to buy Swedish products for money. On this point of policy Colbert was insistent, and it was for this that he was most severely criticized by a young envoy of the king of Denmark. Frederic de Gabel was sent as a special emissary from Denmark to France. He had conferences with Colbert on commercial matters. In December, 1669, Gabel sent a report to Frederick III, the Danish king, in which he recounted a conversation he had had with "M. de Thurenne." Gabel said that he had declared to the Frenchman that France could secure the advantages which the Dutch and the English were reaping from the northern trade provided:

Monsieur Colbert were willing to allow a little less constraint in the manner of doing business, and to approve, instead of that which is carried on by the exchange of goods, that which is done in cash; and unless he does so he must not hope for success, since it was not reasonable that he should force our peasants and the subjects of Your Majesty to consume more salt and brandy than they need, in order that the subjects of the Very Catholic King may have, without money, the goods of our country, which France could not do without as well as we could do without the salt and brandy of France; and that I would find it very strange to see myself obliged to wear four French suits when I needed only two a year, merely to keep money from going out of the lands of the Very Catholic King.<sup>103</sup>

But Colbert's views were not easily changed. In 1670 the company sent to the North a number of ships loaded with wine and salt. They secured goods that had been bought there, including 300 masts at Riga. Some of the ships got back in June, others later. Despite the fact that Colbert had urged the directors to use French ships, it was

<sup>103</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 465-66, 508-9; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 85-89, 305.



found necessary to employ nearly 40 Dutch vessels to bring in naval stores. Colbert, seeing that the company was not going to be able to supply all the needed naval stores, was soon placing orders again with his old agents at Hamburg and other Baltic ports. In June, 1670, he wrote the directors at La Rochelle to congratulate them on the return of some of their vessels. He urged them to sell French goods in the North so cheaply as to destroy the competition of the Dutch. He told them that the company must have at its disposal as soon as possible at least 40 ships.

In 1671 Colbert had two ships built for the company at Dieppe. He endeavored, also, to get it to use French ships for its trade. In January, 1671, a royal ordinance gave a bounty, to all French vessels used by the company, of 5 *livres* per ton; of this sum 3 *livres* was to be paid by the king, 2 *livres* by the company. Later in the year Colbert took steps to make the offer of this bounty widely known. But it was also in January, 1671, that Colbert gave the company permission to use 30 foreign vessels, urging it at the same time to acquire ships of its own. In the same month Colbert promised to buy imported naval stores only from the company for that year, and expressed the hope that the decree forbidding the loading of brandy on Dutch ships would help the company. "The difficulties," Colbert wrote to the directors, "which the king is all the time putting in the way of Dutch commerce will make almost all the commerce of the North fall into your hands."<sup>104</sup>

It was also in January, 1671, that Colbert ordered the directors to pay a 4-percent dividend. On the seventeenth of the month he wrote them that such a dividend should be paid. They replied, objecting to the proposal, probably on the grounds that earnings had not been sufficient to warrant such a step. On January 23 Colbert replied, saying:

I do not find the reasons you adduce to prevent a dividend of 4 percent strong enough; I feel on the contrary that it is always necessary to let those who have put money into your company taste some profit, there being, perhaps, nothing which brings people who are not used to commerce to apply themselves to it more than such a dividend.<sup>105</sup>

The year 1671 was a busy one for the company. Of the goods to be purchased for the navy, amounting to about 1,000,000 *livres*, the com-

<sup>104</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 530-31, 597-98, 596-97, 601; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 594; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, p. 90.

<sup>105</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 602.

pany was to supply half, including masts, spars, planks, anchors, and copper. The company had at its disposal about a dozen ships. But Colbert had to grant it passports for the employment of 20 Dutch vessels. War with the Dutch seemed imminent. Naval stores would be needed, and it did not seem incongruous to use Dutch ships to bring them to France. In addition to the goods that had been ordered, the company ships and the Dutch vessels hired by it brought back from the North tar and other naval stores which had not been ordered. There was some complaint that the quality of the goods was poor and the prices high. The company had the misfortune, in 1671, to lose one of its vessels off Gravelines, but the cargo of oak was salvaged.

During the course of the year Colbert kept urging the company to expand its business. In February he wrote the directors to congratulate them on the negotiation with the Elector of Brandenburg of an agreement to supply his territories with salt. He urged them to send thither goods of the very highest quality, so as to get the Baltic trade away from the Dutch. In July he was encouraging two directors, Lagny and one of the Pagès who had been sent to the North to secure trade agreements and to study the markets there. He told them if they could secure for French merchants in Denmark the same treatment as Danish merchants, they might promise that France would extend to Danish merchants all the privileges enjoyed by the French. The king would also be willing to remit one-half the 50-sous-a-ton duty on Danish ships coming to get salt in France. If Denmark would free a fixed number of ships of the company from all tonnage duties, France would do the same for an equal number of Danish vessels. Lagny and Pagès made little progress with their negotiations, but the full reports they brought back on northern commerce served as a basis for the treatment given that subject by Savary, in *Le Parfait Négociant*. Colbert kept urging the company to make its salt whiter, so that it would be more acceptable in the North than that from Portugal. He reiterated his conviction that, by taking to the Baltic area good products, the French would win the trade from the Dutch, who sent thither low-grade goods and diluted wines.<sup>108</sup>

From its foundation the Company of the North encountered one chief obstacle—the opposition of the Dutch. Boissonnade and Charliat,

<sup>108</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II,<sup>2</sup> 606, 625-27, 630-31; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 90-101.

who have written the most authoritative account of this company, would have it that Colbert's chief purpose in founding it was to prepare for a conflict with the Dutch. They point out that Colbert's efforts to produce naval stores in France "limited in advance the future development of the company's business." On the other hand, Colbert's interest in the northern trade was of long-standing, and it is doubtful whether he envisioned the possibility of a war with the Dutch in the early years of his ministry. It seems quite likely that without formulating his ideas very definitely, he vaguely looked forward to a day when France would sell large quantities of wine, salt, and brandy in northern Europe, and secure in exchange some northern products and a large amount of money. To bring about this situation, as well as to prepare France for a naval struggle with Holland, the Company of the North seemed a suitable instrument.<sup>107</sup>

Whatever Colbert's motives for founding the company may have been, the Dutch were quite clear that it was aimed at them. They protested from the start that its privileges were contrary to the Franco-Dutch treaty of 1662. They tried to comfort themselves by arguments purporting to show that trade with France was harmful to Holland and impoverished the latter country. As the company got under way, employment and business declined in Holland. The Dutch were particularly fearful that the French would persuade the Baltic countries to build their own ships and to trade directly with Spain and Portugal, as well as France. Earnestly the Dutch strove by diplomatic means to thwart and discredit the French with the northern nations.

From the start, Colbert sought to warn the Company of the North against the Dutch and to stimulate it to competition with the merchants of that country. In August, 1669, in a letter to Colbert de Terron, he declared himself confident that the new company would succeed in the long run. "They should be especially on guard against the Dutch," he said, "and regard them as mortal enemies and as people who will go to any lengths to ruin them [the French]." "Assuredly we must do without the Dutch if that is possible." When, in the summer of 1669, the Dutch sent extra quantities of naval stores to La Rochelle to glut the market and so injure the Company of the North, Colbert wrote to the directors to reassure them. The trick, he said, was such as might be expected of the Dutch. But the directors need not worry, for the king

<sup>107</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, p. 102.

would support the company, and buy, at a fair price, all the naval stores that it brought back from the North.

By November, 1669, the Dutch were already showing what Savary termed "an inconceivable jealousy" of the French efforts to wedge their way into the northern trade. In that month Colbert wrote Pomponne to assure him that the Dutch had no grounds for their claims that the privileges of the company were contrary to the Franco-Dutch treaties. During the next year Colbert told the directors of the company that the disquietude and opposition of the Dutch would doubtless increase, but that they should try to do the Dutch "more harm" through their commerce than the Dutch could do them. At about the same time, a special Dutch envoy, the son of the famous Grotius, was protesting vigorously at Paris against the company and its endeavors, but he secured no satisfaction from the French.<sup>108</sup>

Through 1671 the commercial struggle between France and Holland grew more intense, as each nation resorted to decrees and prohibitions against the goods and ships of the other. In April, 1672, the war came and with it a crisis in the existence of the Company of the North. In anticipation of the outbreak of hostilities, Colbert had arranged to secure neutral flags and passports for some of the company's ships. Thus five vessels were able to sail during the summer of 1672. But four others, for lack of proper escort, were held at La Rochelle to await the end of the war, which, it was thought, could not be long delayed. In August, 1672, the directors of the company announced their decision to Bellinzani in these terms:

Monseigneur [Colbert] having written us that the escort vessel, which we had asked of him for the four ships that we have had loaded for the North, could not be granted because of the danger to which it would be exposed; and the season not permitting us to wait any longer, we shall dismiss the crews of these vessels and leave their cargoes in [illegible] until we have occasion to make a different decision. We are the more resolved on this, in that M. Frémont tells us not to send the ships out without the orders of Monseigneur and a good escort.<sup>109</sup>

Of the five ships actually sent to the North, some were captured despite their neutral guise. To keep the company going, Colbert gave

<sup>108</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 103-7; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 481, 488-89, 558; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fol. 289; J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 82 ff.

<sup>109</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 109-10; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 161, fol. 105 (for the letter to Bellinzani).

it orders for naval stores, which were filled by using neutral vessels and even Dutch ships, to which passports were granted. But the freight and insurance rates were so high that they precluded the chance of profits. The company's own ships were used to distribute masts secured from Auvergne and the Pyrenees, and to trade with Spain and Portugal. From 1672 to 1674 the trade between France and the Baltic was carried on largely by Swedish and Hanseatic ships, together with a few Dutch vessels. From 1675 to the end of the war a large number of English vessels also took part in this trade.

*The decline of the company.*—Already in 1673 the Company of the North was in debt; its business was reduced to small proportions; and its directors were discouraged. In that year they began to sell off its ships. None the less, the company continued to secure some naval stores and to sell them to the government during 1673 and 1674. In the latter year, for example, it sold goods to the value of 43,512 *livres* to the arsenal at Rochefort. In 1675 an English ship brought in a quantity of wood and naval stores for the company. During the next year, despite its efforts to secure goods with neutral ships or in France, the company was unable to fill the orders given it. Gradually the directors sold off the company's ships and began to liquidate its affairs.

By 1677 the company had sold most of its ships, though it still had a number, including the recently completed "Saint-Louis," at its disposal. After hearing a report by Colbert on the state of the company, the Royal Council on April 1, 1677, issued a decree ordering the agency at La Rochelle, where most of the company's business had been carried on, liquidated. Tersmitten and one of the Pagès were directed to sell off the effects and property of the agency.<sup>110</sup>

From this time on, for some years, the company existed in a state of suspended animation. After the close of the Dutch war Colbert resumed his efforts to build up trade from France to the North, but rather by encouraging private merchants than by attempting to revive the company. On August 7, 1681, for example, he wrote to the intendant of Rouen urging him to stimulate

the chief merchants of Honfleur, Rouen, and other seaports to take some goods and products of the kingdom into the North, because this is a commerce of very great utility, not only through the advantage that the merchants gain in taking thither wine, brandy, tobacco, sugar, molasses, and other

<sup>110</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 110 ff.; 154-55; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 164, fols. 184-86.

products, from the kingdom, but also because they bring back, besides various goods which have a good sale, all that is necessary for navigation.<sup>111</sup>

After Colbert's death it looked, for a while, as if circumstances were going to be very favorable for increasing direct trade between France and the North. Seignelay considered reviving the company, and on September 4, 1684, a royal decree ordered that its books be examined. But no definite action was taken, though the agency at La Rochelle may have been reorganized a little earlier. It was in 1684 that the last of the company's ships, "Les Armes de la Compagnie du Nord," was sold at La Rochelle. Most of the men associated with the early days of the company were no longer in a position to do anything about commerce, especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685. Jean de Lagny and Nicolas Frémont d'Auneil, it is true, both eventually rose to important official positions. But Colbert de Terron and Bellinzani both died in 1684. Pierre Formont died in 1685, and his wife and sons fled the country to avoid persecution as Protestants. Louis Pagès went bankrupt in 1684 and died some years later.

The company's privilege came to an end in 1689. It was found in the final liquidation of its affairs that it owed large sums of money. To settle its debts, financiers who had been fined by the Chamber of Justice in the years 1661 to 1665, and who had not paid their fines, were forced to turn over to the company for the benefit of its creditors more than 2,000,000 *livres*.<sup>112</sup>

*Summary.*—There were no intrinsic reasons why the Company of the North should not have succeeded. While the profits from the importation of naval stores would probably never have attained great proportions, the market in the North for French wine, brandy, salt, and manufactures, and for French West India products could have been developed almost without limit. But the company was organized during a period of intense Franco-Dutch commercial rivalry, and the Dutch were prepared to, and did, use every advantage of their intrenched position to prevent the French from gaining a foothold in the northern trade. When the Franco-Dutch struggle was transformed into open war, the French were at a distinct disadvantage because of their geographical position, because they were newcomers in the field, and because of the Dutch sea power.

<sup>111</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8752, fols. 482-83.

<sup>112</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 116 ff., 159-60.

Then, too, like most of Colbert's other companies, that of the North was based upon government support and initiative. Its chief members were collaborators of Colbert. Its capital was supplied largely by the government, either directly or indirectly. The company was not able to enlist the backing of any large or stable group of merchants. When the exigencies of the Dutch war diverted the attention of the government and reduced its ability to give support, the company was forced gradually into inaction.

It was probably a mistake, too, to fix the active seat of the company at La Rochelle. That port was convenient for the shipment of wine, brandy, and salt, but it was much farther from the Baltic than Amsterdam. At best, even if the company had succeeded in acquiring the 40 ships which Colbert had set as his goal for it, the Dutch would still have retained a large share of the trade between France and the North, for in normal times between 100 and 200 Dutch ships were engaged in this commerce.

Yet in the end Colbert's efforts in behalf of the Company of the North were not altogether in vain. Its activities awakened interest, in French mercantile circles, in the northern trade. Its business ventures familiarized some merchants with the details of this commerce. Its ships taught sailors and navigators the routes to the North. Savary's accounts of Baltic commerce, which were directly based on information which came to France from emissaries of the company, gave French business men the information they needed to engage in that trade. Even after the company ceased its activities, the ships of French merchants continued to find their way to the Baltic. Between 1679 and 1689 ships flying the French flag appeared at Elsinore, to the number of about 20 each year.

By the end of the seventeenth century the French had agents or consuls not only at Danzig and Elsinore, but also at Christiansand and Bergen. The northern countries increased their direct trade to France greatly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Consuls from Denmark-Norway, Sweden, Prussia, Courland, and Poland were to be found in French ports. Ships from the North played an important part in provisioning France during the last two wars of Louis XIV. In part, the growth of French trade with northern Europe after 1685 was due to the fact that French Huguenot refugees carried thither the

taste for French products. But in part it was due to the pioneering work done by Colbert and his Company of the North.<sup>113</sup>

#### 5. COMPANIES FOR THE LEVANT AND NORTH AFRICA

*The Company of Albouze.*—Colbert's companies were founded not only for commerce in distant lands and for traffic with which the French were unaccustomed, but also for the Mediterranean trade, in which the French had long played a leading rôle. Colbert had scarcely come to power before two brothers, Roland and Michel Fréjus, merchants of Marseille, began revolving in their minds projects for the reëstablishment of the Bastion of France, and of French commerce with North Africa. Roland Fréjus, either in 1662 or early in 1663, came to Paris, secured an audience with Colbert, and explained the plans. Colbert encouraged him and promised aid. It was decided that he should go to Algiers and negotiate for a grant of privileges from the authorities there. But before he had made this trip, a decree of the royal council, dated March 12, 1663, granted to him and his brother the exclusive right to trade with the Bastion of France for eighteen years.

Early in October, 1663, Roland Fréjus was ready to sail for Algiers, for on the second of the month he wrote from Marseille to Colbert that he was about to start. The brothers must have already organized a company, for Roland remarked in his letter that he was leaving Michel in charge of the company's affairs. He went on to say that he would always keep in mind "the wise advice" with which Colbert had honored him. He added that without Colbert's constant support, he could not hope for success.<sup>114</sup>

Roland Fréjus sailed for Algiers, and by February, 1664, he was back in Marseille. In a long letter, written on the twenty-third of that month, he reported his progress to Colbert. He had found, he said, the high officials in Algiers ready to make peace with France. As they had captured only four French vessels the previous year, peace would not entail for them any great monetary loss. But if the peace were so delayed that they had time to reach agreements with the English and the Dutch, then they would be more reluctant to abandon their attacks on French shipping.

<sup>113</sup> Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, pp. 120-24.

<sup>114</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 119, fols. 346-47; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 230-34.



The Algerians, Fréjus continued, were really anxious to have French commerce with their territories reestablished, since the taxes they could levy on it would help to pay their military expenses. There were some, however, who opposed granting to Fréjus the Bastion of France, for they feared that the French would use it as a base for martial rather than for commercial operations. But Fréjus had secured the approval of his proposals from the entire "divan." He had not negotiated a definitive agreement, for he feared that the government of Algiers was about to change hands, and that any steps taken by the old officials would be repudiated by the new ones.

He had left everything in such shape, he declared, that the final steps could easily be taken. He asked if Colbert wished him to go back to Algiers and complete the arrangements for the establishment of trade at the Bastion of France. He concluded by announcing that he had brought back a "fine lion and a lioness" which were "very affable," and asked Colbert what he should do with them.<sup>115</sup>

The efforts of the Fréjus brothers must have met with Colbert's approval, since on November 4, 1664, a decree of the royal Council granted them the exclusive right to trade not only with the Bastion of France, but also with Albouzême (Alhucemas) in Morocco. This privilege was given them "in consideration of the evident perils" to which they exposed "not only their persons but also their property," and because of the "prodigious expenses that this establishment must entail." There were, however, some ill-willed individuals, probably other merchants of Marseille, who made light of the privilege granted to the Fréjus brothers, on the ground that it was backed merely by a decree. The brothers therefore appealed to the king for a "precise and special declaration" on the matter. This the king was willing to grant. In October, 1665, a royal declaration was issued, specifying the rights granted to the "Company of Commerce of Albouzême and the Bastion of France," which was composed of the Fréjus brothers and certain others associated with them.

The declaration gave this company the perpetual monopoly of trade with Albouzême, and a monopoly for eighteen years (counting from 1663) for that with the Bastion of France. It required the company to establish ports at or near Albouzême, the Bastion, Cap Negre, La Calle, Caproux, and le Callou, and to repair such buildings as existed

<sup>115</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 119, fols. 475-79.

there. The company was to be obliged to send out soldiers, workers, supplies, and munitions to the posts it established. It was given the right to make treaties with the various North African rulers. The declaration provided that the status of a noble who joined the company would not be impaired by that action. The company was to present to the king ten of the finest Arab horses, each year for eighteen years.<sup>116</sup>

The company seems to have concentrated on trade with Morocco. In 1669 the company encountered serious difficulties, for on May 3 a letter was sent in the king's name to register a protest with the king of Fez. It read in part:

Very High, Very Excellent and Very Powerful Prince, our dear and good friend: we have learned with displeasure of the bad treatment which has been inflicted upon one of our subjects sent to Your city of Tetouan by the company formed in our Empire to establish in Albouzême a reciprocal commerce with your states.

It went on to say, that, though the agent of the company had already been released from imprisonment in Tetouan, Louis XIV was sure that when the king of Fez learned that this French subject had not only been incarcerated for a time, but also robbed of his money and goods, he would immediately punish the criminals and see that the things stolen were restored to the victim.<sup>117</sup>

On the very next day Colbert wrote to the marquis de Villars, the French ambassador to Spain, to complain of another outrage perpetrated upon the unfortunate company. Colbert declared that a bark belonging to the "Company of Albouzemes" had been pillaged at Malaga and that the sieur du Raye, a member of the company, had been assassinated in the affray. The matter was too serious to pass over, said Colbert, and he told Villars to endeavor to secure for the company damages proportional to the losses it had suffered.<sup>118</sup>

Whether these misfortunes were too much for the company, or whether it was already in difficulties when they occurred, its end was not long delayed. Before many months had passed, its privileges were transferred by a decree of the Council, to the newly created Levant Company.<sup>119</sup>

Meanwhile, another company, headed by a certain sieur Arnaud,

<sup>116</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 230-34; cf. Hanoteaux and Martineau, *Histoire des colonies françaises*, III, 76-77.

<sup>117</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 92-93.

<sup>118</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fol. 76.

<sup>119</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, p. 184.

had been formed for trade with Algiers. In June, 1666, it secured a treaty from the Algerian authorities. This treaty was approved by a decree of the royal council in September of the same year. In 1667 Arnaud negotiated another and a more advantageous treaty with the Algerians. It granted him the privilege of establishing coral fisheries, the monopoly of trade in leather, wax, and other goods, and the right "to rebuild the ruins of the Bastion." This treaty was renewed in 1670. In that year Arnaud, together with his associates Lafon and the sieur de Vesc, sought to obtain greater privileges from Louis XIV. They succeeded, and a decree of January 15, 1671, granted them not only the exclusive right to trade with the Bastion, La Calle, Cap Rosa, and Cap Negre, but also exemption from one-half the *cottimo* on goods brought to Marseille.

The company, despite its advantages, was not a success. It was re-organized in 1678 by a sieur Dusault. But the renewal of hostilities between France and Algiers destroyed its trade, and the attempts to carry on commerce at the Bastion were more or less desultory until 1691. Still another company, formed to carry on trade with Cap Negre in 1666, secured a treaty from the Bey of Tunis. But its operations were likewise interrupted by warfare between the French and the Barbary pirates. A new company for the same purpose was, however, organized in 1685.<sup>120</sup>

*The formation of the Levant Company.*—Colbert was quite ready to support these ephemeral North African companies as they came into being, but much closer to his heart was the organization and progress of the Levant Company. This company was begotten by a curious combination of circumstances. Merchants of towns like Lyon were anxious to share in the rich Levant trade, concentrated at Marseille. Colbert wished to bring order into Mediterranean commerce. The idea of companies was in the air and had been widely advertised by the campaigns for those of the East and West Indies. Many wealthy merchants and officials were anxious to curry favor with Colbert by supporting one of the commercial ventures in which he was interested. Colbert was disgusted with what he regarded as the willful and selfish obstinacy of the Marseille merchants in clinging to their old business ways and methods. Above all, he desired to encourage the woolen manufactures

<sup>120</sup> Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 185 ff., 218 ff.; Levasseur, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 298-99; AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 6, decree of August 30, 1685.

and so to reform the Levant trade that French merchants would send to the Near East not money, but goods made in France.

The idea of a Levant company was one that had appealed to Colbert for years. As early as 1652 he had advised Mazarin to form a company for trade to the Levant. But when he came to power, Colbert's first efforts in behalf of Mediterranean commerce were devoted to sweeping the sea clear of pirates, organizing the escort of vessels, reforming the consulates, making Marseille a free port, and improving relations with the Turks. Yet he did not lose sight of the idea of a Levant company, for he felt that the success of the Dutch and the English in trade with the eastern Mediterranean was due to the fact that their merchants were organized into companies, and he was sure that only by some well-conceived organization could the unruly businessmen of Marseille be properly controlled.

In 1664, when solicited to invest in the East India Company, the Chamber of Commerce of Marseille had responded with the puny subscription of 3,000 *livres*, while the individual merchants of the city, to a man, refused to risk their money in the venture. When, however, the Chamber heard that Lyon was to have a special board of directors in the East India Company and that it was being proposed to grant this board control of the Levant trade, it decided that discretion was the better part of opposition and raised its subscription to 20,000 *livres*. But the Lyon merchants had even more dangerous plans afoot, for they were discussing the formation of a great Levant company, which should have a monopoly of all trade from France to the Near East. Hearing of this project, the Chamber of Commerce of Marseille dispatched to its deputy at the Court an earnest and excited letter of protest. It is worth quoting at length:

As it is a question of our complete ruin, you must not, if you please, omit anything in opposing it. . . . They will tell you that those who do business at present will do it in the future within the company, you must realize that our city is composed of a great number of inhabitants who are worth only 500 to 1,000 *livres*, who, through their industry, do business with that sum and turn it over two or three times a year, and withdraw it when they see fit, things which they would not be able to do [in a company], and another large number who do business only on credit. From the day when the company is established, their throats will be cut; and all these families will go to live in some place other than Marseille; in this number are included the majority of the sailors, from which the king will receive a

very great injury as regards the equipping of his vessels and galleys, since, when the company has been formed, five or six vessels in each *échelle* will do all the commerce, which will give employment to very few sailors in comparison to the multitude necessary for the number of vessels, *polaccas*, and barks which every day sail from this port. . . . If you were not at Paris a group of merchants would be deputed to go to throw themselves at the feet of the king. . . . These companies are nothing but monopolies, odious to God and to the world, and as there is nothing which should be more free than business, so there is nothing more distressing than to see it restricted into the hands of a few individuals; and if people wish to point to the company that the English and the Dutch have for the Levant and to claim that it is by this method that they have attained great wealth, to that the response may be made that the English and Flemish could not do other than form into companies this [trade] which individuals could not carry on because of the distance of their countries from the Levant and Barbary, a thing which is not proper for us, who are so near the Levant and Barbary, it being so easy for individuals to do business there and to make plans according to their energy.<sup>121</sup>

Through the opposition of the Marseille merchants, who reënforced their arguments by the distribution of considerable sums in the proper quarters, the plan for a Levant company dominated by Lyon was dropped. Colbert then took up the idea of a similar company to be organized at Marseille. Through Arnoul, intendant of the galleys, he broached the project, but he was promptly rebuffed. Arnoul wrote the minister that nothing could be done with the Marseille merchants, that they neglected business to disport themselves at their country estates, that they were "idlers, great talkers, and newsmongers," and that the city would never carry on the "great and beautiful commerce" for which nature seemed to have fitted it. He suggested that merchants be imported from Lyon and Rouen to show Marseille how to do business.

In 1669 the merchants of Lyon again suggested the establishment of a Levant company, with wide monopoly rights. In connection with their proposition, Colbert drew up a *mémoire* which set forth some of his ideas on the matter. It would be unfair, he felt, to cut off the trade of the private merchants of Marseille with the Levant. The purpose of such a company would be to get trade out of the hands of foreigners, not to reduce the commerce carried on by the French. Still, the formation of a company would be very helpful, and it might be granted cer-

<sup>121</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 179-81; Lavissee, *Histoire de France*, VII (Part I), 250-51.

tain privileges which would give it an advantage over private traders. For instance, it might be permitted to export coin or bullion to the value of 1,000,000 *livres* during its first year. This sum could be reduced by 100,000 *livres* a year till it was wiped out. At the same time, all merchants outside the company might be forbidden to export coin or bullion, on pain of death. In addition, the French ambassador at Constantinople could be instructed to aid the company. The consulates might be reformed and put under the control of the company. Naval escorts might be provided for company vessels. Colbert's modifications did not appeal to the merchants of Lyon and it was from another nucleus that the Levant Company grew.<sup>122</sup>

By the early part of 1669 a small private company for the Levant trade had been formed by a certain sieur Laurent de Chauvigny, of Marseille. Colbert's interest was soon roused. In March, 1669, he told Arnoul, intendent of the galleys at Marseille, to support Chauvigny's company, since it seemed capable of carrying on a considerable trade. In May he ordered the lieutenant of the admiralty at Marseille to exempt one of its ships from certain quarantine regulations. In July Colbert wrote, in the king's name, to the ambassador of France at Constantinople, told him of the company, indicated that its chief purpose was the export of cloth and other manufactures to the Levant, and directed him to aid it in every way possible. In August Colbert instructed Arnoul to pay Chauvigny's company a bounty of 16 *livres* on each piece of cloth it sent to the Levant and to make the payments with such publicity that the other merchants would be stimulated to ship out cloth, in the hope of similar advantages. Despite the aid of Colbert, Chauvigny's company did not prosper. In the first half of the year it suffered some loss in connection with a shipment of soap. By December, 1669, its dissolution seemed imminent.<sup>123</sup>

Chauvigny's company had not long been active before a group of wealthy men at Paris, anxious to secure Colbert's favor, decided to form a Levant compny. They made overtures to Chauvigny, and in April, 1670, he reluctantly consented to join his enterprise to theirs. Among the founders of the new company were Pennautier, treasurer of the Estates of Languedoc; the ubiquitous Bellinzani; Daliez de la Tour,

<sup>122</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 449-52; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 181-82.

<sup>123</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 115-16, 184; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>1</sup>, 150-51; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 182-83.

the faithful agent of Colbert, and a number of rich businessmen such as Augustin Magy, César Caze, and Jean Tronchin. In all, there were twenty associates, of whom only Chauvigny and Magy were located at Marseille. All the rest gave Paris as their place of residence, in the articles of the company, though Colbert had written Daliez de la Tour to encourage him in his efforts to secure the adherence of the merchants of Lyon. Two of the twenty soon resigned, thus reducing the number of members to eighteen.

The new company took over all the obligations of Chauvigny's venture. Each of the associates was obligated to subscribe 30,000 *livres* to the company. Thus the Levant Company had at its organization a capital of 540,000 *livres*. The king, unbeknownst to some of the associates, supplied the 30,000 *livres* which was invested in Bellinzani's name. In addition, he promised the company a loan, without interest, for 6 years, of 200,000 *livres*. The articles of the company were drawn up at its Paris office, in the rue du Mail, on June 30, 1670. Its term was set at eight years. Four of the associates were to act as directors. They were to reside part of the time, at least, in Marseille. In conjunction with any others of the associates present in that city, they were to conduct the operations of the company and to make weekly reports to the associates at Paris. (In practice, Magy did most of the work for the company at Marseille.) The annual meetings of the company were to be held on November 1, at Marseille, and each of the associates was to be present in person or to be represented by a proxy.

A decree of the Council of July 18, 1670 gave the company governmental recognition and established the privileges which it was to enjoy. Of these the most significant was a bounty of 10 *livres* on each piece of cloth of French manufacture exported by the company to the Levant. But in addition, all provisions and munitions for the company's ships were to be exempt from import and export duties. Its goods were to be free from the *octrois* of cities. Its directors were to enjoy the rights of bourgeois. Its agents and directors were to be free of vexing duties like that of watch and ward. The company was to be allowed to transfer goods from one ship to another in port, without paying customs duties. The property of the company was to be exempted from seizure for the debts of its individual members. The king promised to protect and support the company and to provide escorts for its vessels. The privileges of the company were further extended, after a short time,

by the transfer to it of all the rights of the unsuccessful company of the Fréjus brothers.<sup>124</sup>

It is significant that the company was not granted a monopoly of the Levant trade. Colbert undoubtedly hoped that it would grow, prosper, and absorb a large portion of the trade from Marseille to the Near East. He regarded it as an instrument which would be invaluable in stimulating the export of cloth rather than money, a development for which he devoutly hoped. But he was not willing to run the risk of disrupting established commercial relations by giving it exclusive trading privileges. None the less, the Chamber of Commerce of Marseille registered its earnest opposition to the company. When it was proposed, in 1670, to establish at Marseille, under the auspices of the company an insurance company modeled after the one in Paris, the merchants of Marseille, many of whom wrote insurance policies, protested so vehemently that the project was abandoned. There was, however, an interesting connection between the Levant Company and the insurance company at Paris. Bellinzani, a member of the former, was also a director in the latter. On December 26, 1671, Colbert ordered all the consuls abroad to send to Bellinzani, for the benefit of the insurance company, reports on the vessels leaving and entering each port, and on all other matters pertaining to commerce. It can scarcely be doubted that Bellinzani aided the Levant Company by information he received as a director in the insurance company.<sup>125</sup>

*Operations of the company.*—The Levant Company began its operations in 1670, and before the next year was out, its agents were established in Smyrna, Aleppo, and Cairo. The agent at Smyrna was almost immediately forced by the French consul to accept the post of deputy of the French "nation" in that port, on the grounds that he did more business there than anyone else. As Colbert intended, the company devoted its chief energies to the exportation of cloth. By October 1, 1671, it had sent out 656 pieces; and by December 31, 1672, it had exported 615 pieces more. On these shipments it collected bounties of 6,560 *livres* and 6,150 *livres* respectively. Between May 8, 1673, and September

<sup>124</sup> Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 175-80; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 280; La Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, V, 432; Lavissee, *Histoire de France*, VII (Part I), 251-52; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 183 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 507-8; AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 6, decree of March 2, 1674.

<sup>125</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 183-85; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 640.



20, 1674, it exported 993 pieces and collected 9,930 *livres* in bounties thereon. But thenceforth its shipments seem to have fallen to a few hundred pieces a year, and the only bounty payments recorded are 2,430 *livres* on October 5, 1679, and 1,190 *livres* on November 19, 1679.

Though the cloth factories of Languedoc were eventually built up and the quality of the output much improved under the tutelage of Colbert, it seems that, at this period, the cloth produced was not good enough nor cheap enough to win the Levant market from the Dutch and the English. It should be added, however, that Colbert held the cloth of Languedoc to be excellent in quality; that the Dutch war hampered the operations of the company; and that the Dutch, to hold the Levant trade, threw on the market there large quantities of cloth at low prices.

The company was supported by Colbert partly, at least, to reform the Levant trade. But it had not been doing business for two years before he caught it engaging in one of the practices which he most condemned. In December, 1672, Colbert wrote to Pennautier to say that he was shocked to learn that the company had been sending to Portugal brocades of imitation gold and silver. Somewhat later, he was further distressed at hearing that it had taken to Aleppo 6,000 *piastres* of money of poor alloy, the use of which was prohibited.<sup>128</sup>

By the end of 1672 the company was already in financial difficulties. It appealed to Colbert for aid, and presented to him a report of its operations, couched in such terms as would be likely to appeal to him. According to this report, it had endeavored to send manufactures to the Levant and to reduce the export of money. It had contracted with the woolen manufactures of Languedoc to purchase 2,000 pieces of cloth, of which 1,500 had already been exported. It had begun the sale in the Levant of a textile called caddis, manufactured at Nîmes. It had exported, in addition, other fabrics, paper, and clocks. It had commenced a new kind of commerce—that between Marseille and the French West Indies—and it had established a sugar refinery at Marseille. These efforts had cost large sums. Furthermore, the company had only 4 ships at its disposal, since it had had the misfortune to lose 3 by shipwreck or capture. In the future, it hoped to introduce into France the manufacture of damask, satin, and velvet, as made at Genoa

<sup>128</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 185 ff.; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 175–80; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 671.

and Venice, since these textiles sold readily in the Levant. But for such a project, and to continue its business, it would need additional capital.

Impressed by the report, Colbert ordered Bellinzani to direct the associates at Paris to send funds to Marseille to support the operations of the company. But by the autumn of the following year, the affairs of the company were in such shape that drastic steps were necessary. The leading members of the company explained the situation to Colbert. To raise new capital, Colbert put the weight of governmental authority behind what amounted to a reorganization of the company. A decree of the Council of State of September 30, 1673, ordered each of the associates to furnish the company with 17,000 *livres*. The company was authorized to admit new associates. Any of the associates who did not wish to invest the requisite sums might retire from the company. But these who did so would be held liable for their shares of the losses that had been incurred by the company, while those who remained in the company would enjoy the advantage of having their portions of the losses covered by the 200,000 *livres* which the king had advanced in accordance with the decree of July 18, 1670.

Chauvigny wrote to Bellinzani, upbraiding him for concealing the true state of the company from Colbert, in order to secure its perpetuation. If Colbert had been informed that the Levant Company had lost 200,000 *livres* of its own as well as the 200,000 *livres* of the king, he would not, Chauvigny was sure, be in favor of keeping it in business. Other members of the company must have felt as Chauvigny did, for of them all only Pennautier, Daliez de la Tour, François Paparel, Augustin Magy, César Caze, and Jean Tronchin, put into the company the sums required by the decree of September 30, 1673. Even Bellinzani failed to make his payment. Early in 1674 the six who had invested the additional sum of 17,000 *livres* each asked the king to enforce the decree and make over to them to cover the losses of the company the sums he had advanced to it. In accordance with their request, a decree of the Council of State of March 2, 1674, which was based on a report made by Colbert, appointed two auditors, the sieurs Hotman and Le Vayer, to go over the books of the company and establish the true extent of its losses since the date of its foundation.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> There is some confusion as to the sums of money advanced by the king to the company. The decree of September 30, 1673, as quoted by Masson, mentions 200,000 *livres* as the amount. The decree of March 2, 1674, which Masson does not mention and which is to be found in the "Archives Nationales," series AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 6,

The decree proceeded to order Bellinzani to put into the company 17,000 *livres* from the royal funds, so that he might continue to represent the king at its sessions.<sup>128</sup>

During the remainder of the Dutch war, the company, though not very active, retained some sort of organization, thanks, perhaps, to the new capital that had been put into it. No sooner was the war with the Dutch over than an effort was made to reinvigorate the company. A decree of September 10, 1678, renewed its privileges for a period of ten years. In the decree the company was styled as a new one, but treated as a continuation of the old one. Though it was to enjoy the bounty of 10 *livres* on each piece of cloth exported, the sums due it on this account were to be paid out of the 17,000 *livres* invested by the king in Bellinzani's name, in accordance with the decrees of September 30, 1673, and March 2, 1674. In addition to all the rights and privileges of the old company, the rejuvenated one was granted a monopoly of the importation and sale of senna. To protect the public, however, it was provided that the company must not charge more than 2 *livres*, 10 *sous* the pound therefor.<sup>129</sup>

Another decree of the same date (September 10, 1678) was devoted exclusively to the question of the senna monopoly. It declared that the king was informed that most of the senna consumed in France was of "poor quality and harmful to the human body," that this inferior senna was brought from Tripoli, Barbary, and Syria, while senna of the proper quality was to be bought only at Cairo, from Turkish agents. The decree therefore ordered that after two months' time all senna used in France was to be secured in Egypt by the reëstablished Levant Company. No other person or company was to import senna of any sort into France under penalty of 500 *livres'* fine and confiscation of the senna. The company's monopoly was to run for ten years.<sup>130</sup>

The grant of the senna monopoly roused considerable opposition. In a meeting of May 18, 1679, the *six corps des marchands* of Paris, as a group, associated themselves with the grocer's guild to denounce

mentions the amount as 1,100,000 *livres*. The discrepancy is hard to explain, as the king in the short interval between the decrees, can scarcely have advanced 900,000 *livres* to the company, especially since he was at the time engaged in waging the Dutch war.

<sup>128</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 187-89; AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 6, decree of March 2, 1674.

<sup>129</sup> AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 1, decree of September 10, 1678.

<sup>130</sup> AD XI, No. 9, *liasse*, 1, decree of September 10, 1678.

the senna decree before the king and Colbert. But though protests were ineffectual, the company did not profit from its monopoly. Shortly after its reorganization the company entered into a contract with the agent of the Turkish sultan at Cairo, by which it agreed to purchase 50,000 pounds of senna a year from him. At the end of three years it found that it could not market that much and that it had, in its warehouses, unsold senna to the value of 184,000 *livres*. When the company tried to break its contract, the Turkish authorities threatened to force all French merchants to buy senna to the amount agreed on. The Chamber of Commerce of Marseille urged that the company be made to live up to its obligations. The company begged to have its monopoly rescinded. Finally, in 1684, the company was relieved of its monopoly. The Chamber of Commerce was made to pay the company an indemnity of 26,876 *livres* for the "loss" of its exclusive privilege. The Egyptian pasha seized 18,198 *piastres* from French merchants as his indemnity, and the unfortunate experiment came to an end.<sup>131</sup>

At the time of its reorganization in 1678, the form of the company was greatly modified. Its affairs were divided among an office at Paris, one at Lyon, and one at Cette, each of which was almost like a sub-company. The Paris office was composed of Bellinzani, Caze, Tronchin, and Pennautier. That at Cette was in the hands of persons so inexperienced that they had to ask the Paris office to send them both money and information as to how to conduct trade with the Levant. Through Bellinzani, the king sought to keep somewhat closer control over the business of the company, for decrees of September 24, 1678, and of October 14, 1679, authorized him "in the name of the king" to sign the articles of association and also the "deliberations of the company," thus making it clear that Bellinzani was merely acting as a sort of proxy for the king. Early in 1679 Pennautier earned Colbert's congratulations by securing some new associates. In the same year Colbert seems to have turned a deaf ear to propositions, made by merchants of Agde, for the formation of a company which, aided by the king, would carry on trade with the Levant.<sup>132</sup>

Colbert had some reason to veto such proposals, for it seemed, with

<sup>131</sup> KK, No. 1340, fols. 397-98; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 191-92.

<sup>132</sup> AD XI, No. 9, *liasse* 3, decree of May 24, 1686; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, p. 190; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 56; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 295, *mémoire* from Daguesseau to Colbert, 1679.

all the advantages granted to the Levant Company, that it must succeed. In addition to the privileges given it at its reorganization, Colbert turned over to it for a small sum the offices of the consuls at Cairo, Aleppo, and Sëide. In 1681 he strove to assist the company to establish a warehouse at Geneva. To aid it in what he regarded as its primary function—the exportation of cloth—Colbert dowered it, by a series of decrees in 1679 and 1680, with exemptions from all transit, tariff, and municipal duties on the goods it exported. In the year of his death he even bolstered the company's finances by a subsidy of 10,000 *livres* annually, to be paid it from the municipal funds of Lyon. Colbert watched over the operations of the company with eager interest. In May, 1679, he arranged to have its cloth exports certified, so as to simplify the payment of the bounties. In December, 1679, he rejoiced when he heard that the Cette office had entered into a contract for the purchase of cloth for export. In 1681 he sent Pennautier to Lyon, to set in order the business of the company there.<sup>133</sup>

In an effort to build up the export trade in cloth, the Levant Company entered into relations with the cloth manufactures of Languedoc. In 1683 this association was consolidated by a contract, dated May 15, between the company and sieur Varennes, the proprietor of the cloth factory at Saptès. By this agreement Varennes promised to sell no cloth for the Levant save to the company, and to supply it, each year for 6 years, with 390 pieces of cloth of stipulated quality and value. The company, in addition to paying for the cloth, agreed to subsidize the manufacture of Varennes. On the same day, by a similar contract, the Levant Company arranged for the purchase each year of 390 pieces of cloth from the cloth factory at Clermont. Two weeks later it was arranged that 3 of the members of the Levant Company should be associated for 6 years with the proprietors of the cloth manufactures of Saptès and Clermont, in the conduct of those enterprises.<sup>134</sup>

*Summary.*—But all the advantages of the Levant Company, all its efforts, and all the steps taken in its behalf, were not sufficient to make it a success. The year 1683, which had begun under such favorable

<sup>133</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 190–93; "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fol. 112; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 480; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, p. 556; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 355, Letter from Pennautier to Colbert, December 23, 1681.

<sup>134</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 190–91; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 335; Boissonnade, *Colbert, son système et les entreprises industrielles d'état en Languedoc*, p. 24.

auspices for it, ended in semidisaster, since Colbert, its great patron, died, and Bellinzani was imprisoned on charges which included speculation and fraud. In the succeeding years Seignelay strove to continue the work of his father in behalf of the company. But the company wilted and died. It lost money on its senna monopoly. It lost money on its transportation of cloth within France. Its control of the consulates brought it no profits. Its efforts to export cloth met with the continued competition of the Dutch and the English, and if it did not lose money on the textiles it shipped, neither did it make a profit. Already in 1684 its finances were in precarious position. In 1685 the Levant Company was replaced by a new one called the Company of the Mediterranean, which as it developed, was more important as an industrial than as a commercial enterprise.<sup>135</sup>

On the whole, Colbert's endeavor to build up a powerful Levant Company must be counted a signal failure. But if this company is considered merely as a part of Colbert's whole Mediterranean policy, and an instrument for encouraging the export of the manufactures of France, then the fact that eventually the cloth exports, stimulated by the bounties established by Colbert, reached important proportions, sheds an aura of success, even over this ill-fated venture.

#### 6. THE WEST AFRICAN COMPANIES AND MINOR VENTURES

As early as the fourteenth century French merchants seem to have established trading posts on the southwest coast of the westward bulge of the African continent, especially in the neighborhood of the Senegal River. In the succeeding years these commercial stations were, for the most part, abandoned, and the latter part of the sixteenth century found the Portuguese dominant along the whole of the West African coast. But there remained a tradition of French trade in the Senegal region, and some merchants from Rouen and Dieppe seem even sporadically to have engaged in voyages thither, and to have maintained there some sort of small agency.

Under Richelieu a number of attempts were made to organize companies for the West African trade. Of these the only one to achieve any real importance was that founded at Rouen in 1626. It was granted a royal privilege in 1633. It built a fort at Saint-Louis, near the mouth of the Senegal River, and it sent thither as its agent a young man named

<sup>135</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 192-93.

Jacques Fumechon. This company retained some sort of organization down to 1659, though it was not very active after the death of Richelieu. In 1659 this Rouen company sold its establishments in Africa and all its business, for 92,000 *livres*, to a new company called the *Compagnie du Cap-Vert et Sénégal*.

The new company engaged in the West African trade for five years, apparently with some success, for out of its profits it reconstructed the fort at Saint-Louis, and added a ship to the four which it already had. In 1664 Colbert determined to bolster his West India Company by granting to it a monopoly of commerce with Africa, both that it might make money therefrom, and that it might secure slaves for the West Indies. Accordingly he arranged that the West India Company should buy the *Compagnie du Cap-Vert et Sénégal*. After some negotiations, the sale was arranged, and a contract was signed on November 28, 1664. The West India Company paid the older organization 150,000 *livres* for its post, fort, and buildings at Saint-Louis, and for its ships, goods, supplies, and all the accessories of its trade.

At this time the French had, on the West African coast, only the post of Saint-Louis. The English had a fort called St. James, near the mouth of the Gambia River, a post on the Sierra Leone coast, and had just captured the important trading center of Gorée from the Dutch. The Dutch had a post at Arguin, and before long secured the return of Gorée. In addition, the Portuguese had small stations to the south of the Gambia River. Yet none of these nations was very firmly entrenched. The field was open for commercial exploitation by the French.<sup>136</sup>

But the West India Company concentrated its attention on the Caribbean islands, to the neglect of Africa. To be sure, it sent up the Senegal River, in 1666, an exploring expedition of thirty men, of whom only five got back safely to the coast. In the same year, too, it sent out a frigate which visited Rufisque and sailed down the coast as far as Saint Thomas. The company's agents on the frigate traded and studied the commercial situation as they went along, and even secured a most favorable treaty from the native king of Commendo. In the last years of its existence, urged on by Colbert, the company made some efforts to establish the slave trade between Africa and the West Indies. But when

<sup>136</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation de l'Afrique occidentale sous Colbert*, pp. 339-72, 451-62.

the West India Company was dissolved in 1674, it had done little to build up French commerce with West Africa.<sup>137</sup>

In 1669 and 1670, while he was making efforts to put the trade of the West Indian islands into the hands of private merchants, Colbert likewise encouraged private traders to engage in the commerce with West Africa. In 1670 he told the king proudly that there were already six French ships trading along the Guinea Coast. In that year he said of the Guinea trade, "No commerce in all the world produces as many advantages as that." He expressed the hope, too, that French merchants would find it possible to develop the slave trade. To encourage them, he arranged, two years later, for a bounty of 13 *livres* per head, to be paid on all Negroes brought from Africa to the West Indies.<sup>138</sup>

*The Senegal Company.*—Neither the company nor the private traders, however, made sufficient progress to satisfy Colbert, and in 1673 he reverted to the policy of granting the slave trade to a monopolistic company, but not to the West India Company, which was already being dissolved. On November 8, 1673, the royal commissioners, Menjot and Ménager, who had been appointed to settle the affairs and liquidate the assets of the West India Company, entered into a contract with a small new company composed of three men: Egrot, who was a royal official; François, a merchant of Paris; and Raguenet, who had been interested in the earlier African venture which had been bought up by the West India Company.

By this contract the West India Company turned over to the new Senegal Company, at the price of 75,000 *livres*, all its property in Africa, including munitions, goods, livestock, post, fort, and buildings at Saint-Louis, together with its monopoly of the West African trade, which, though it had been recently disregarded, had thirty years to run. The monopoly, however, was not to extend to all the African coast, but only to the area from Senegal to the Gambia river inclusive. In addition, the new company was to enjoy all the rights and privileges which had been granted to the West India Company. It inherited, likewise, the obligation to support priests in its African stations, and to pay to the *domaine d'Occident* a *marc* of gold each year, or its equivalent, in African products. This agreement was ratified by a decree of

<sup>137</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 469-89; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 285-88.

<sup>138</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 577; VII, 250; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 532; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 259-60.



the Council, on November 11, 1673. Colbert promised the new company the enjoyment of the 13 *livres*' bounty on each slave it took to the West Indies. By March, 1674, the company was ready to start business.<sup>139</sup>

As one of its first steps, the Senegal Company sent out as its agent in Africa Jacques Fumechon, who had first gone thither some forty years before. During the following years the company devoted itself to building up its trade in the products of the Senegal region. It eschewed, for the most part, the slave trade, though it seems to have sent a few slaves to the West Indies. In 1675 it had an unfortunate experience. One of its ships, returning from Africa, laden with 17,600 hides, 38 tons of gum and 2,100 pounds of ivory, was forced by bad weather into an Irish port. There it was seized by creditors of the West India Company, who insisted on regarding it as the property of that defunct organization. At about the same time Raguenet died and was replaced by his heir, Bains. Shortly afterward Egrot retired and was replaced by his nephew, Le Brun.

Though the Dutch war hampered its trade somewhat, the company profited largely from the hostilities. One of its ships returning from Santo Domingo in 1677, after a three-day fight captured a Dutch vessel manned by 100 men and armed with 22 cannon. The company immediately petitioned the king for the bounty of 500 *livres* per cannon which was paid for such captures. More important for the company were the events which had transpired somewhat earlier in Africa. In the fall of 1677 a French naval squadron, under the comte d'Estrées, sailed for the West Indies to fight the Dutch. On its way it visited the African coast, and on November 1 captured the Dutch post of Gorée.<sup>140</sup>

At that time one of the most energetic agents of the company was Du Casse, the commander of one of its ships. In 1677 he had busied himself in making treaties with the native rulers at Rufisque, Portudal, and Joal. After a visit to France, he came back to Africa in 1678 and worked hard to strengthen the position of the company. First, he fortified Gorée against any counterattacks by the Dutch. Then he himself launched an attack on the Dutch post of Arguin. He failed in his first

<sup>139</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 600-10; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, p. 223; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 288 ff.

<sup>140</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 135, fol. 38; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 612 ff.

attempt. The second time, after a week's bombardment, the Dutch surrendered. Du Casse then proceeded to destroy the fort and post. The Dutch attempted to recapture Gorée. But the treaty of Nimwegen confirmed the French in possession of it. The Dutch then sought to make the position of the French untenable by raising the native tribes against them. Du Casse put down the risings with iron determination and seized the opportunity to wrest yet more favorable treaties from the native rulers.

In 1679 Du Casse returned to France and was rewarded by being made a director of the company. He was sent to Santo Domingo to help build up the slave trade there. Eventually he found his way into the royal navy and attained high rank. When Du Casse left Africa in 1679, the Senegal Company was in an extremely strong position there. It possessed fortified posts at Saint-Louis and Gorée, and smaller trading stations scattered along the coast. It had favorable treaties with a number of native rulers. It had almost ousted the Dutch traders. It was possessed of a number of ships, and it was carrying on a profitable trade. But it had attained this success largely by concentrating on the commerce in West African goods, hides, ivory, feathers, gum, and gold dust. As these commodities could be secured on very favorable terms in exchange for iron, salt, textiles, and trinkets, the profits were large. So far, the company had done but little in the slave trade, though in 1677 it seems to have sent 80 slaves to Santo Domingo. It was in an effort to enter the slave trade in a large way that the company was to come to grief.<sup>141</sup>

As early as 1675, Colbert, dissatisfied with the fact that the Senegal Company was not sending slaves to the West Indies, had looked around for some method by which the islands might be assured of a supply of Negroes. Since 1670 the slave trade had been open to all French merchants, though private traders could not go to the area set apart for the Senegal Company. Colbert determined to make the slave trade a special and separate monopoly. By a contract of October 16, 1675, the exclusive right to engage in the slave trade between West Africa and the West Indies was granted to Jean Oudiette, who was also the farmer of the *domaine d'Occident*, which was in some senses the heir of the West India Company. The contract was to run for four years.

<sup>141</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 614 ff.; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 291.

By it Oudiette bound himself to take to the West Indies 800 slaves each year.<sup>142</sup>

The state of the slave trade, as it was known to the French in the year in which Oudiette signed his contract, is described at length by Savary. The lack of success of the Senegal Company in the slave trade may be explained by the fact that, as Savary pointed out, the best slaves were secured, not in Senegal, but farther south, in Guinea. The author of the *Parfait Négociant* went to some pains, in his work, to defend the slave trade. He wrote:

This trade seems inhuman to those who do not know that these poor folk are idolaters or Mohammedans, and that the Christian merchants by buying them from their enemies retrieve them from a cruel slavery, and cause them to find in the islands where they are transported not only a milder servitude but also knowledge of the true God and the way of salvation through the good teachings given them by priests and ecclesiastics who take pains to make them Christians; and there is reason to believe that save for these considerations this trade would not be permitted.<sup>143</sup>

Putting aside ethical considerations, Savary went on to give practical information. He said that the slave ships had to sail quickly from their ports, since

These slaves have such a great love for their native land that they sink into despair at seeing that they are leaving it forever, which makes many of them die of sorrow; and I have heard it said by merchants who carry on this trade in Negroes, that more of them die before leaving port than on the voyage: some throwing themselves into the sea, others beating their heads against the ship, others holding their breath to stifle themselves, and others refusing to eat so as to die of hunger.<sup>144</sup>

Once Africa was out of sight, however, the slaves might be pacified, especially if music were played to them so as to keep them "gay" on the long voyage. Savary added that the difficulties of all trade with Africa were such that it was more suitable for companies than for private individuals.<sup>145</sup>

Despite the information which he might have gleaned from Savary, and despite his monopoly, Oudiette seems to have been unable to make

<sup>142</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 718-19; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, p. 226; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 314-15.

<sup>143</sup> J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 139-40.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

even a pretense of living up to his contract. It is probable that such slaves as were shipped to the West Indies were sent by arrangement with the Senegal Company, as for instance the 80 landed in Santo Domingo in 1677.

Though Oudiette had found it impossible to fulfill his agreement to send 800 slaves a year to the French islands, his contract had not run its full course before the Senegal Company assumed a much heavier obligation. On behalf of the company, François, Bains, and Le Brun, on March 21, 1679, signed a contract which was confirmed by royal decree four days later. By the terms of the contract and the decree, the company undertook, for 8 years, to ship 2,000 Negroes a year to the French West Indies, and to furnish the king with Negro galley slaves, of whom the number and the price were to be agreed on later. In return, the company secured a monopoly of the slave trade, the promise of the regular bounty of 13 *livres* for each Negro landed in the islands, the right to sell slaves direct to the colonists, and exemption from one-half the import duties on the sugar and tobacco it brought from the islands. In addition, its monopoly of African trade was extended to include the whole of the West coast of Africa from Cape Blanc to the Cape of Good Hope. Interestingly enough, the bounty to be paid the company for each slave it transported was to be supplied 10 *livres* by the king, and 3 *livres* by the farmer of the *domaine d'Occident*, who was Oudiette.<sup>146</sup>

To handle this large contract, the company had to expand and reorganize. François, Bains, and Le Brun took in six new associates—Duvivier, of Paris; Thouret and Duport, of La Rochelle; Petit-Saint-Louis, of Bordeaux; Richmond, who had assisted Du Casse in Senegal; and Ballade, of Santo Domingo. The reorganized company secured in June, 1679, the issuance of royal letters patent confirming its rights, privileges, and existence. That the company had plans not only to exploit its monopoly of the slave trade, but also to supply the French islands with indentured servants is indicated by a passport issued to it on November 27, 1679. This document gave it permission to send to the French West Indies 400 men taken from the *hôpitaux* of Paris.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 718-19; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, p. 226; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 314-17.

<sup>147</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 202-3; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 720-22; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, pp. 475-76.

But, in the event, the company was to have more than it could do in the matter of slaves alone. It was, however, in a better position to engage successfully in the slave trade than any of the companies or individuals through whom Colbert had previously endeavored to build up that traffic. It had a thriving commerce, well-established trading posts, and a sizable fleet of ships. In May, 1679, when it started to develop the slave trade, it had at its disposal 21 vessels with a total tonnage of 5,720, and a total armament of more than 400 cannon. Of these ships 8, with a total tonnage of 2,630, were to be used to take slaves from Africa to the West Indies, and 4 more were to be employed to transport slaves to Marseille.

Though the auspices were propitious, the outcome was dire. Before the first year was out, the company had lost 400,000 *livres* and to finance its effort it had gone into debt to the extent of 1,200,000 *livres*. On the first ships sent to America, a great number of slaves died. Two of the ships returning to France from the islands—the "Saint-François" of 400 tons, with a cargo of sugar, and the "Paix" of 400 tons, with a cargo of tobacco—were lost at sea. Two more ships were lost on the way back from Africa to France. On the Negroes taken to the West Indies money was realized but very slowly. On the slaves taken to Marseille the company lost money. Of one shipment to France of 73 Negroes, 6 died on the voyage to Normandy. From Normandy they were taken to Versailles, to be shown to Colbert, and 11 more fell ill or died on that journey. Colbert rejected 3 of the Negroes, and they had to be replaced. Finally, at Marseille, the authorities refused 20 of the slaves as unfit for service in the galleys. Of a shipment of 73, only 36, or less than half, were accepted as galley slaves.<sup>148</sup>

The company might have survived its various misfortunes, if, early in 1680, its bankers, Kervert and Simonnet, had not failed. Their failure, in turn, was due to the fact that they had overextended themselves to finance the company. Their liabilities amounted to 2,000,000 *livres* and of this sum three-fourths was for the company's account. The company was greatly embarrassed by the bankruptcy of its financial agents, but its directors were confident that it was still solvent and could win its way back to a firm footing. To aid them in their efforts, Colbert secured for the company a royal decree (April 9, 1680) which

<sup>148</sup> Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 226-28; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 723-24; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 293-94.

granted it protection from its creditors. The decree forbade the creditors to take action against the company or to attempt to seize its property or effects for the space of two years. This prohibition was reënforced a week later by a second decree, and still others were issued from time to time. Yet despite this exercise of royal authority, the creditors made efforts to seize the goods and the ships of the company, and even the goods of its individual members.

A series of meetings between the creditors, the bankers, and the members of the company resulted, on May 14, 1680, in an agreement by which Kervert and Simonnet undertook to pay off one-fourth of what they owed within three months, while the company assumed the other three-quarters of the liabilities of the bankers. Two fourths it was to pay in cash within two years. The third fourth it would pay in its own stock. The agreement was confirmed by royal decree of May 28, 1680, which also gave representatives of the creditors the right to be present at meetings of the company.

During 1680 the company strove to continue in business, but misfortune dogged its footsteps. More ships were lost. The planters of the West Indies were very dilatory in paying for the slaves they bought. The load of debt on the company was crushing and its creditors watchful and insistent. To enable it to continue its trade, Colbert authorized the company, toward the end of 1680, to use such money as came in to finance new shipments to Africa. This prevented the company from meeting the first payment it had promised its creditors. In December the company offered to turn over certain sums due it and other assets to its creditors, and this arrangement was approved by royal decree. But again in March, 1681, Colbert had to come to the aid of the company with a decree which allowed it to postpone the payments it had promised its creditors. In January, 1681, Bellinzani, who was interested in the Senegal trade, was already writing that to remedy matters a new company would have to be formed. By May Colbert was trying to form the new company. In June the old company definitely lapsed into bankruptcy, with a deficit of 1,184,569 *livres*.<sup>140</sup>

Just how many Negroes it had succeeded in taking to the West Indies in the period of its activities, that is, from June, 1679 to June, 1681, is not clear. The records of bounties paid seem to indicate that it landed in the islands 2,398 Negroes. But there is reason to believe

<sup>140</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 724 ff.; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 294 ff.; "Manuscripts français," No. 11,315, fols. 95-96, 133.

that part of these payments represent sums embezzled by Bellinzani and other officials, and that the actual number of slaves delivered was less than 1,000. Colbert, writing in the king's name in May, 1681, spoke of "the small number of Negroes" which had been "carried to the islands in the last two years." He would hardly have termed any number greater than 1,000 "small," especially considering the record of the previous endeavors.<sup>150</sup>

The failure of the Senegal Company, as reconstituted in 1679, was probably due to a number of factors. One was sheer bad luck and misfortune. A second was that it tried to do too much, and to engage in the slave trade on too large a scale all at once. A third was that its earlier prosperity had been based not on the slave trade, but on the commerce in African products in the Senegal region. A fourth seems to have been that the best slaves came not from the Senegal area, with which the agents of the company were familiar, but from regions farther to the south. It is probable, too, that the company had to resort to such extensive borrowing because its capital was entirely insufficient to finance an extensive venture in the slave trade.

*The new company.*—Some time before the final bankruptcy of the company, Colbert was busy forming a new one, to take over its African stations, continue its commerce, and develop the slave trade. The chief difficulty in creating a new company was that Colbert insisted that it must take over the debts of its predecessors. It was hard to find a group of men ready to undertake a business which seemed unfortunate, when the further handicap of a sizable debt was thrown in to make the bargain more unattractive. It was from royal officials anxious to please the king, whom Colbert declared to be much interested in the project, that the minister at length recruited the members of his new company. In the group that Colbert gathered, there were few experienced merchants. The leading figure in the new organization was Claude Dapouigny, a *conseiller* and secretary of the king.

By a contract of July 2, 1681, the old Senegal Company turned over to the new one its posts, and all its property in Africa, in America, and on the seas, together with all its rights and privileges. The new company likewise took over the contracts into which the old company had

<sup>150</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 11,315, fol. 133; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, p. 727; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 296-99 (for a discussion of the possible fraud).

entered, including that for the slave trade, and one for the transportation of marble from Genoa to France. The marble was destined for use on the buildings being constructed by the king. The company had engaged in this side venture in the hope of realizing quick profits.

In the same month, July, 1681, royal letters patent were granted to the new company, which was styled the *Compagnie du Sénégal et Côtes d'Afrique*. They gave official approval to the contract between the old and the new companies, confirmed its privileges, and granted it for thirty years the monopoly of commerce on the west coast of Africa from Cape Verde to the Cape of Good Hope, including the exclusive right to engage in the slave trade. They further gave it the right to grant passports to foreigners who wished to come to the French West Indies to purchase slaves, and the right to use a coat of arms consisting of an azure field sown with *fleurs-de-lys*, supported by two Negroes, and surmounted by a crown. In July 22, 1681, the members of the new company met, drew up articles of association, and fixed the capital of the company at 600,000 *livres*, with the provision that, if necessary, 400,000 *livres* more was to be put into it.<sup>151</sup>

The new Senegal Company sent out agents to Gorée, to La Rochelle, and to the West Indies. Before the new company was definitely organized, Colbert had been confident that the profit to be made "from the sale of these Negroes" and from "the bounty of thirteen *livres* which will be granted for each head of Negro that they take to the islands," would inspire the company to ship to the West Indies a sufficient number of slaves. Once the company was formed, he sent out letters to several of the intendants, telling them to aid the company in every way. How far the new company sprang from Colbert's efforts is indicated by a letter of October 22, 1681, from its directors to Patoulet, the intendant in the West Indies. They told him that they had received the letter which he had addressed to the old company, asked him to see that they enjoyed all their privileges and that the colonists be prevented from securing Negroes from foreign sources, and suggested that the quality of the sugar made at Martinique needed improvement, since the last shipment had been very poor. They informed Patoulet further that of the members of the old company only M. François had

<sup>151</sup> Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 301-2; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 732-39, 99-101; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 356-59.



entered "the new company which Monseigneur Colbert has formed by order of His Majesty."<sup>152</sup>

The new company seems to have accomplished but little in 1681 or 1682. It was hampered by the fact that while many of the assets it had taken over were of dubious value, as for instance a claim against the defunct Chamber of Insurance of Paris for seven ships that had been insured and lost, still it had to pay out good money to settle the debts that it had assumed. By the end of 1682 the new company had paid out over 600,000 *livres* in cash on these debts. At this point, three members of the company retired from it, losing their capital investment thereby, and the remaining members had to put in additional funds to keep the business going.

In 1683 the company seems to have made renewed efforts. In August, just before he ceased his labors forever, Colbert wrote to an official urging him to aid the company, since it was of great importance to the West Indies. The next month, after Colbert's death, the company secured the issuance of a royal ordinance forbidding the colonists of the French islands to secure slaves from the other islands or from the mainland of America. But the next year the company was officially declared in default on its slave-trade contract. Du Casse had retired from the company and, with others, he was urging the formation of a Guinea company. Against this plan the Senegal Company protested vehemently. It explained that if it had not shipped 2,000 slaves a year it was because there was a market in the islands only for about 1,200. Furthermore, the company pointed out that the planters were so slow in paying that it was already owed, in the islands, some 6,000,000 pounds of sugar. This amount of sugar would represent the price of something like 1,000 slaves, and it seems that the company had probably taken to the West Indies considerable numbers of Negroes, especially in 1683.<sup>153</sup>

The pleas of the Senegal Company were unavailing. On September 12, 1684, a decree of the council stripped it of a large part of its privileges. The decree rehearsed the facts of the slave-trade contract and declared that the company had not only failed to take to the islands 2,000 Negroes a year, but also that it had fallen so far short of that

<sup>152</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 11,315, fols. 133, 151-52; "Collection Clairambault," No. 465, fol. 78; "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fol. 478.

<sup>153</sup> Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 102-14; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 303-7; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 342; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 434; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 386.

number that there had been a serious shortage of slaves in the French West Indies. The decree further stated that the area in Africa conceded to the company had been too large for it to control and develop, with the result that foreigners had been able to found new posts and to secure the gold dust which should have come to France. For these reasons the decree revoked the monopoly of the company for trade on the African coast, save for the area from Senegal to the Gambia River, and rescinded the company's slave-trade contract and monopoly. The company was, however, to have the right to take slaves to the West Indies if it wished to do so. Commerce in the area south of the Gambia River was to be open to all French traders.

The Senegal Company complained bitterly of this decree. It insisted that up to October, 1684, it had sent 4,561 Negroes to the islands. It accused Du Casse of betraying it. It pleaded that, at least, its monopoly should be extended as far as the river of Sierra Leone. Seignelay, who was trying to carry on the commercial and colonial policies of his father, hearkened to the arguments of the company. By a decree of January 6, 1685, the extension of monopoly for which it had asked was granted. In the same month, however, Du Casse and the other proponents of the Guinea Company secured for it letters patent and a monopoly of trade to the African coast from the river of Sierra Leone to the Cape of Good Hope. The Senegal Company remained in existence for ten years, carrying on trade with the area of its concession, and strengthening somewhat the hold of the French on that region. The Guinea Company dragged on an unprofitable existence to the end of the century.<sup>154</sup>

*Summary.*—It can not be said that Colbert's African companies were a success, for they were not financially profitable. Nor did they secure for the French islands an adequate and assured supply of slaves. Yet it cannot be held that these companies were complete failures, for they served greatly to increase French trade with West Africa and to strengthen the hold of the French on colonial posts in that region. When Colbert came to power, French commerce with West Africa was of very small proportions. At his death, it totaled something like 1,500,000 *livres* a year. In 1661 the Dutch were stronger than the French, even in the Senegal area. In 1683 the French, with Gorée in

<sup>154</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 400-2, 405-6; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 114-17; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 307-9.

their possession, were able almost to exclude Dutch traders from that portion of the coast.

*Minor companies.*—Among the minor companies of the period of Colbert, there were several which deserve mention. There was one founded just after he came to power which sought to resume in South America the colonial efforts which had been carried on under Mazarin. Its sponsor was Lefebvre de la Barre. With Colbert's aid, in 1662 and 1663 he gathered 15 associates, raised 200,000 *livres*, and formed the *Compagnie du Cap du Nord et Cayenne*. An expedition was organized. It sailed on February 26, 1664, with 6 vessels, 2 of which had been lent by the king, and 1,200 soldiers and colonists. The Dutch were in possession of Cayenne, but they gave way peaceably, and for a consideration abandoned the region to the French.

The Cayenne Company was absorbed into the West India Company in May, 1664. The stockholders in the former seem to have had their holdings transformed into stock in the latter company. Trade with Cayenne was not important, and the climate was unhealthy. But Colbert sought to invigorate the colony, increase its population, and encourage the inhabitants to till the soil. In 1676 the Dutch captured Cayenne. But in the same year a naval squadron, under the comte d'Estrées, recaptured it. Colbert had urged d'Estrées to attempt the recapture, and congratulated him when it was accomplished. At Colbert's death, Cayenne, though of no great significance, was still in French hands. From it gradually developed the modern colony of French Guiana.<sup>155</sup>

Another of Colbert's companies was that of the Pyrenees. Unlike the rest, it was not a colonial nor even, strictly speaking, a commercial company. As early as 1666 Colbert was making arrangements to get masts from the Pyrenees mountains. His efforts in this direction resulted in the formation of a company to exploit the timber resources of that area. The motives behind this step were the desire to develop the resources of France, to reduce the export of money for the purchase of shipbuilding materials, to supplement the imports of the Company of the North, and to provide an additional source of wood, if imports were cut off by war with the Dutch. But when the war actually broke out, the company was not able to supply as much timber as Colbert

<sup>155</sup> Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 366; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 62-67; Chemin-Dupontès, *Les Compagnies de colonisation*, pp. 355, 363; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 526, 611-12, 612-14.

thought it should. On the whole, though the company remained in existence till 1678, and was able to provide the Company of the North and the navy with some wood, it was badly administered and of no great importance.<sup>156</sup>

Another company, intended also to supplement the activities of the Company of the North, hardly progressed beyond the embryonic stage. Undiscouraged by the fact that the merchants of Bordeaux in 1669 had subscribed only a paltry sum to the Company of the North, Colbert, in 1671, tried to organize in that city a company to trade to the North and to America, and to build up the fisheries of France. Early in 1672 Colbert was offering the *droit de bourgeoisie* to any Bordeaux merchant who would invest 4,000 *livres* in the new company. But the Dutch war diverted Colbert's attention, and the projected company came to nought.<sup>157</sup>

## 7. SUMMARY

All in all, it is difficult to evaluate the success of Colbert's companies and of his colonial policies. Not one of the companies achieved financial success nor even stability in his lifetime, and it may be argued that his watchful paternalism throttled the enterprise of French colonists. On the other hand, it is very possible that, save for Colbert's efforts, there would have been no great companies, and that the moribund colonies of France would have died of inanition, or would have been captured by the Dutch or the English.

Colbert's companies did not profit their stockholders, but they opened up and developed, for French merchants, trade to the East and West Indies, to the North and to Africa. After Colbert's time, commerce to each of these regions was to grow mightily on the foundations that he had laid. Even the Mediterranean trade was to achieve phenomenal importance along lines not unrelated to Colbert's activities. As to colonial developments, Colbert built so well that France might easily have retained in the eighteenth century a great colonial empire. She lost it in a struggle with England. But when France resumed her colonial imperialism in the nineteenth century, she directed much of her energy to consolidating her hold upon the regions over which Colbert had first given her some control.

<sup>156</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, clxviii; II<sup>a</sup>, 663-64; III<sup>a</sup>, 46-57; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, p. 78.

<sup>157</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 642; Boissonnade and Charliat, *Colbert et la compagnie . . . du Nord*, p. 83.

## X

### MANUFACTURES: TEXTILES AND STOCKINGS

COLBERT set great store by industry. So highly did he esteem manufacturing enterprises that it is hard to tell whether they, or commercial ventures, were closer to his heart. Like commerce, industry seemed to him a field in which France must be dominant if it was to be a strong, wealthy, and prosperous country.

Colbert's devotion to industry sprang from a variety of theoretical and practical considerations. First, the existence of a wide variety of manufactures in France tended, Colbert felt, to make the country independent of its neighbors and more nearly self-sufficient. Second, it prevented the export of bullion for the purchase of foreign products. Third, through the export of manufactured goods, bullion could be secured for France. Fourth, the products made within the country formed a basis for both domestic and foreign trade. Fifth, industrial enterprises gave employment to many people, and reduced idleness and sloth, which were the bane of the kingdom. Sixth, the presence of manufacturing in a district attracted money thither and facilitated the levying and the collecting of taxes. Seventh, the manufactured products were in themselves useful and desirable for the life of the people and the splendor of the monarchy.

Inspired by these views, Colbert regarded the situation of French industry, when he came to power in 1661, with great distress. Impaired by lack of governmental support, by war, by the decline of commerce, and by foreign competition, the industry of the country seemed to Colbert to be in a deplorable state. Standards of quality were low. Many enterprises had been abandoned. Regulations were unenforced. Manufactured goods were being purchased abroad by the export of bullion. In 1662 Colbert estimated that each year 12,000,000 *livres* went to the Flemish and the Dutch for the purchase of their products, almost as much to the Italians, 1,000,000 to the English, and a like amount to

the Germans and to the Scandinavians, while France was selling to other countries goods to the value of only 12,000,000 to 18,000,000.<sup>1</sup>

The task which Colbert set himself was nothing less than the industrial rehabilitation of France. On the one hand, he sought to support and revivify existing industries and to found all those which the country lacked. On the other hand, he strove so to regulate the industries of France that the quality of all products might be improved, that domestic consumers might be protected, that foreign markets might be retained and enlarged, and that the industrial life of the nation might be well-ordered. This chapter and the next will deal with the first part of his task. The regulation and inspection of industry will be treated in Chapter XII.

In considering French manufacturing in the time of Colbert, it must be remembered that the bulk of it was carried on under conditions inherited from the Middle Ages. Guilds were still numerous and powerful, and the typical industrialist was still a master craftsman, aided and assisted by apprentices and journeymen. In certain rural areas, however, and in some towns and cities, manufacturing was carried on by independent craftsmen, without any guild organization. In addition, the capitalistic types of production were growing in importance. Wealthy guildsmen or independent merchants or entrepreneurs were in many parts of France producing goods under the domestic, or "putting-out" system. Finally there were some examples—and the number of them was greatly increased under Colbert—of true modern factories, in which a capitalist or a capitalistic company brought together scores and even hundreds of workmen, owned the machines at which they labored and the buildings in which they worked, purchased the raw materials, and disposed of the finished products. All these methods of production existed side by side, and were inextricably intermingled.

As in commerce, so in industry Colbert was willing to use any instrument that seemed likely to achieve his ends. At one time or another he supported and encouraged guilds, independent masters, capitalistic entrepreneurs, and industrial companies. He seems definitely to have preferred guilds to independent masters, and individual capitalists to companies. But in any given case he was quite ready to use the means that seemed especially suitable. For some purposes, he even discarded

<sup>1</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, cclvii, cclviii; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 5; cf. Nef, "A Comparison of Industrial Growth in France and England from 1540 to 1640," pp. 661-66.

all indirect approaches and involved the state directly in industrial enterprises. So pervasive were Colbert's interests, so all-embracing his activities, that it came to seem as if the industrial life of the nation were focused in his person. In 1671 Guy Patin could write, "They say that if Monsieur Colbert should die, we would have to bid farewell to all the manufactures that he has caused to be established in France."<sup>2</sup>

*Methods of encouraging industry.*—Colbert's methods of founding new manufactures and of encouraging existing ones were varied in the extreme. He granted tax reductions, especially in the *taille*, to localities which would establish industries or enlarge the ones they had. But such favors were promptly withdrawn, if interest in manufactures waned there. Colbert gave tariff protection to industries he wished to foster. He encouraged exports by means of bounties, by refunds on export duties, and by using French diplomats as business agents. He attracted foreign manufacturers by promises of great advantages, and even went so far as to protect the property they left behind them in their home countries. He persuaded the king to show favor to industrialists, to visit manufacturing establishments, and to use the products of French industry. He lent his aid and gave his favor to nobles, municipal officials, royal officers, and private individuals who would work for the good of French industries. He granted direct subsidies from royal funds to industries of all sorts, or supplied them with capital by means of loans without interest. To aid industry, Colbert overrode religious antipathies even, and lent his support to Protestant manufacturers. Sometimes Colbert hit upon most unusual means of aiding an industry. Once, for instance, a merchant was allowed to secure remission of a fine, by purchasing a hundred pieces of serge locally made.<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes Colbert used indirect methods and persuaded the municipalities or the provincial estates to encourage manufactures by the grant of subsidies, pensions, and exemption from local taxation, or by providing rent-free premises for an establishment. Sometimes Colbert's aid was merely of an honorific sort. An entrepreneur was given the status of a noble, a post as a domestic officer of the king, or the right to call his factory a *manufacture royale*. In some instances Colbert's

<sup>2</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 689; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 334; Koulischer, "La Grande Industrie aux xvii<sup>e</sup> et xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles," p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 691-92, 771; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 76, 277; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 63-65; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, cclvii, cclxxii, cclxxiii; II<sup>2</sup>, 523-24; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, *passim*; "Collection Clairambault," No. 465, fol. 270.

chief aid to an industry was through the encouragement of inventions, of technical education, or the diffusion of knowledge as to processes and methods. Many establishments were benefited by orders for goods for the use of the king and his court.

But the most important mechanism for encouraging industry was the grant of a "privilege," which might include a large number of special favors of the varieties noted above. On the whole Colbert approved of a good deal of freedom in industry, but he was quite prepared to grant exclusive privileges of the most restrictive nature, when it seemed advisable. He had behind him the tradition of two centuries. It seemed as normal in those days, to grant a monopolistic privilege to the founder of a new industry as it does today to grant a similar monopoly to authors and inventors, by means of copyrights and patents. It seemed logical that if an entrepreneur risked capital and effort in the establishment of a new type of manufacture, the state should guarantee to him for a period the fruits of his success. The system was, however, capable of abuse, and monopolies were granted to raise money for the state, or to endow some courtier.

But Colbert's ideal was that exclusive and restrictive privileges should be given only to industries hitherto unknown in the country, or in special cases to older establishments which were in real need of support or regulation. "Every time," wrote Colbert, "that I find a greater advantage or an equal one in liberty, I do not hesitate to do away with all privileges."

When Colbert granted privileges, he did so with extreme care. He consulted with merchants and officials. He investigated the industry in question. He inserted clauses safeguarding any similar industry already established. He demanded evidence that the entrepreneurs were really going to endow France with a new invention or a new type of manufacturing. He held tests to determine the worth of new processes. He limited the duration of the privilege to eight, ten, twenty, or thirty years, though occasionally one was granted for a longer term. Only two privileges of his epoch were to run indefinitely. They were not for industrial, but for theatrical enterprises.

Once the privilege was granted, Colbert took great pains to see that the entrepreneur lived up to the terms imposed upon him. He sent out frequently special investigators, to see what was being done in the privileged establishments. When public policy seemed to demand it,



when an enterprise did not succeed, when a manufacture failed to comply with the terms he had agreed to, Colbert did not hesitate to revoke the privilege.

A typical privilege for a royal manufacturing establishment was apt to include a number of the following provisions: a noble might become a stockholder or director without impairing his status; some of the founders were to be raised to the status of nobles; the arms of the king and the words *manufacture royale* could be displayed over the door of the office or factory; various exemptions—from the *taille*, from watch and ward, from the lodging of soldiers—were given to directors and employees; foreign workers were granted naturalization; exemptions from import, export, and transit duties were allowed on products and on raw materials; a monopoly of the manufacture and sale of the product was granted for a given district and for a limited period; a subsidy of some sort was promised; stipulations were included that within a specified time the entrepreneurs must attain a certain level of production. In the scores of privileges granted under Colbert, there was a wide variety of permutations and combinations of such provisions.

There were also many other types of favors and immunities included in some of the privileges. One of the most cherished was freedom from guild regulation and inspection. In fact a privilege was often regarded chiefly as a bulwark between an entrepreneur and a hostility of a long-established guild. Freedom of religious worship was frequently assured to foreign manufactures who had been brought to France. The title of *manufacture royale* was sometimes made personal, and an entrepreneur was styled *manufacturier du roi*. Sometimes the right to keep porters in royal livery at the doors of an establishment was granted. Frequently the entrepreneur was provided with a pension, a royal office, lodgings, land, the right to occupy sites he needed, or to take such building or raw materials as he needed after indemnifying the owners. Lawsuits concerning privileged manufactures were frequently taken direct to administrative courts or even to the royal Council of State. Royal protection against creditors was occasionally granted in a privilege. Sometimes provisions were included which assured the entrepreneur and his employers tax-free wine, or salt, or food. As a rule, all the privileges were supported by drastic penalties against those who contravened them.

The financial aid assured by the privileges or given to the manufacturer in addition to the favors guaranteed by the privilege, was of

various sorts. Pensions, bounties on production, bounties on exportation, remission of taxes, payment of rent, prizes to workers, loans, outright gifts, wages, board and lodging for apprentices or workers were all included among the methods of assisting industrial enterprises directly. Under Colbert, some 2,000,000 *livres*, charged against the accounts of the *bâtiments du roi* were employed to aid industrial enterprises. This sum does not include amounts spent on enterprises carried on directly by the state, nor those secured to industrialists from provinces, municipalities, or individuals. Nor does it include the millions of *livres* expended by the king for goods with which to embellish his royal dwellings.<sup>4</sup>

The privileges granted by Colbert to those willing to establish new industries may seem excessive. But two considerations must be kept in mind. First, he so highly valued new industrial enterprises and felt them to be such assets to the state that he was willing to go to great lengths to secure them for France. Second, in those days it was really a risky adventure to endeavor to establish a new industry. In one of the chapters of his *Parfait Négociant*, Savary casts some light on the latter point. In giving advice on introducing into France the manufacture of any article, especially a textile, previously made abroad, he listed some of the precautions that should be taken.

*Difficulties and opposition.*—The omniscient Savary declared that after having selected an article to manufacture, it was necessary to use the utmost care in choosing a site for the industry. The locality must have a proper supply of raw materials. The manufacture of London serges at Gournay had, for example, failed, because the local wool was not of a suitable quality. That at Seignelay had been a success only after English wool had been imported. The attempt to imitate English calf leather had failed, because French calfskins were not of the proper sort. Then, too, the locality must have suitable water. Certain silks made at Tours could not be imitated at Lyon because of the difference in the water. The water of some rivers was good for dyeing, while that of others was not. Costs of production must also be taken into account. Labor cost more in Paris "because food is dearer there than in the provinces." The entrepreneur should make extensive tests to be sure that all was well, before he finally selected a site for his new enterprise.

<sup>4</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 3-55; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fol. 345; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 355-56; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 241-42.

But once the locality was chosen, his troubles were not over. To make sure of successfully imitating any product, the entrepreneur must import workers, and even tools, from the place of original manufacture. Thus it was only workers trained in Italy who had been able to produce cloth of gold and cloth of silver and certain silks at Lyon. Thus, too, Cadeau, in establishing the manufacture of Dutch-style woollens at Sedan, had found it necessary to import Dutch workers. Even after his business was started, the entrepreneur must expand very slowly, Savary insisted, "because these kinds of manufactures are not established all at once, and a long time is needed to accustom the public to make use of an imitation fabric, because they always believe that it is not as good as the one after which it is copied; good wearing qualities alone, which can be ascertained only in the course of time, can bring the public to wear the new cloth."

In the case of an entrepreneur who wished to establish a wholly new manufacture rather than the imitation of a foreign product, Savary insisted that the same precautions were necessary. But the risk was less, for, he said, "One cannot lose much on a newly discovered product; because the French, who naturally love a change, never fail to buy it, no matter how bad it is, so as to appear stylish." But it was wise not to go ahead too fast until the regular sales of a product could be determined. Savary was speaking, he said, from experience, since he himself had tried to introduce the manufacture of a special kind of camel's-hair ribbon, a new type of linen and wool drugget, and a luxurious kind of drugget partly made of gold and silver thread. The first two ventures were ruined by changes in style. The third fabric sold very well, at first, and brought Savary a profit of 60 percent, for the cloth was soft and appealed to women because it lay well on the hips. But it was hard to sew. Before a year was out it ceased to sell. "I had to get rid of what was left on my hands, in foreign lands," concluded Savary dolefully.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the difficulties enumerated by Savary, Colbert found that most new enterprises were likely to encounter direct opposition. The guilds looked with distrust and hatred upon any undertaking organized outside the ambit of their control. The municipalities were reluctant to support or even to tolerate new industries. The provincial estates tended to withhold financial and even moral support. The courts

<sup>5</sup> Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 15 ff.

were prone to align themselves against any interference with the *status quo*. The officials coöperated only in the most dilatory and lackadaisical fashion. The people set against Colbert's schemes the massive wall of folk inertia, and so successfully that Colbert could do naught save rail at the inveterate idleness of cities like Poitiers.

Nor was it only at home that Colbert met with opposition. The Dutch, the Italians, the English, and the Germans bitterly resented Colbert's efforts to make France the leading industrial nation of Europe. By commercial means, they sought to ruin the export trade of France, and, on occasion, they even strove to flood the French domestic market with their wares. More directly, the foreign nations endeavored to thwart Colbert's attempts to recruit industrial technicians abroad. When French diplomats and consuls tried to secure the services of workers and master craftsmen, they were met by the enactment of new laws and the enforcement of old ones. In Venice a worker who listened to the rosy promises of the French ran the risk of imprisonment, of the confiscation of his property, and even of mob violence. If he stole away to carry his skill to France, the authorities might take vengeance on his family. Or that vengeance might pursue him even to Paris, for in 1666 and 1667 two of the best Venetian workers in the new mirror factory there were poisoned.

In Germany the French agents who sought to recruit workers did so at the risk of life and limb. In England it was possible to inflict even the death penalty on a worker who wished to take to a foreign land his industrial knowledge and skill. In Holland and the Spanish Netherlands the authorities confiscated the property of deserting workers. Despite such opposition, by lavish use of money, by the prestige of the French diplomatic agents, and by dazzling offers of privileges and advantages, Colbert was able to secure for his new enterprises veritable armies of foreign workers. Cloth-makers and weavers of all sorts were brought in from Holland and Flanders. Metal workers were imported from Germany; tar-makers from Scandinavia; lace-makers from Italy and Flanders; hat-makers, weavers, and leather-workers from Spain; glassworkers from Italy; goldsmiths, steel-workers, and stocking-makers from England; sugar refiners from Holland and Germany; and master leather-workers even from far-away Russia.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 731-32; Thomas, *Une Province sous Louis XIV*, pp. 191-92; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 39-41.

On the other hand, Colbert was most zealous in guarding for France its workers and industrial techniques. Silk-stocking frames had originally been brought to France from England. But Colbert was extremely anxious to prevent such looms, or workers who knew how to make them, from going out of the country. In 1679 he congratulated an official who had stopped the export to Mallorca of some silk-stocking frames, and added that it was "very important that these sorts of manufactures be not transported out of the kingdom." Or, again, a Swiss merchant who sought to hire silk-stocking workers at Lyon was jailed by order of the archbishop. In the last year of his life Colbert wrote sternly to an intendant, directing him to thwart a Spanish merchant who was endeavoring to buy silk-stocking frames and taffeta looms and to hire workers at Nîmes.

Even more important was the matter of luster silks, or, as they were called in contemporary England, lustrings. The process for making them had been invented and applied at Lyon. In 1670 a silk worker of that city, Anselm Questant by name, formed a plan to set up this and other silk processes at Florence, where his son was established. The project was discovered, Questant arrested, and the whole matter investigated in a most searching fashion. When the incident was reported to Colbert, he ordered the archbishop of Lyon to see that the culprit was punished severely and that he was prevented from leaving the country. Despite Colbert's efforts, the luster-silk process seems to have been taken to Italy in his lifetime, and after his death it was established in England by the aid of French emigrants.

The same technique was used by Colbert in other cases. Two makers of spangled velvet, who wished to go from Lyon to Florence, were arrested and held for trial. A typical case is that of four Parisian master makers of silk, named Pilodeau, Lambert, Le Roux, and Vaussier. In 1679 they, with twenty or thirty workers whom they had gathered together, were hired by the Spanish ambassador to go to Spain to establish a silk manufacture there. It was arranged that they should sail on a ship with the ambassador's luggage.

Getting wind of the scheme, Colbert wrote posthaste to the intendant of Rouen to clap the would-be emigrants in jail, to "provide scantily for their nourishment," and to keep them till the ship had sailed. The masters were to be kept in jail a long time, Colbert directed, "so as to prevent other Frenchmen from taking the same road and transporting

manufactures out of the kingdom." In a later letter Colbert remarked, "It is even necessary that those sorts of folk should suffer a little for having dared to undertake a venture of this nature." Again, he said, "As for the masters, it will be good that they suffer quite a while." Still later he wrote, "It is necessary to keep the four masters in prison a long time and to cause them to suffer, because there is no punishment established against them by the laws and ordinances of the kingdom." In another epistle he explained that this summary detention was to serve "as their punishment for having wished to take to Spain the manufactures of the kingdom." Finally, after more than two months in prison, the workers were released by Colbert's orders. But the four masters were kept on in jail, that they might learn their lesson thoroughly.

If a French craftsman did get out of the country, Colbert spared no efforts to get him back. Through diplomatic and business connections, Colbert would threaten to punish the man's family, or he would promise to set him up in business, back in France. On one occasion he offered not only to establish in France an entrepreneur who had gone to Portugal, but he also agreed to pay the French workers who had gone with him thirty or forty *livres* each, if they would come back to France. When a French salt-maker, named Desbordes, went to Denmark, Colbert was sure that he would be unable to make salt successfully there. But none the less he authorized the French ambassador at Copenhagen to offer him a present if he would return to France.<sup>7</sup>

Thus Colbert sought to retain for France the industrial techniques that had been developed in the country, while at the same time he was earnestly endeavoring to gain for France the techniques of other lands. The policy was intellectually inconsistent, but to Colbert it was justified by the insistent demands of national interest. France must be the leading industrial nation of Europe. To achieve this position, it must build up every industry it had. It must found every industry it had not.

#### I. FINE CLOTH

Of all the types of manufacturing in which Colbert interested himself, that of textiles seemed to him the most important. From the

<sup>7</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, fol. 556; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 194-95; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 759; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 155, fols. 276-78; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 568-69, 618, 638, 666-67, 672, 708; Clément, *Colbert*, p. 394; "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 153-54, 159, 167, 173, 177, 183, 194.

humblest peasant to the most haughty noble, every man must be clothed. Colbert was determined that France should produce as many kinds of textiles as was possible, that every Frenchman should be dressed in French fabrics, and that foreigners, even, should be clothed to some extent in the products of French looms. As he surveyed the situation, he found that French linens held an important place in both the domestic and the foreign markets. But though France produced a wide variety of woollens, especially of the ordinary sort, still her imports of woollen fabrics totaled, in 1662, 5,220,000 *livres*. In fine woollens, above all, the French were prone to buy the luxury fabrics of the Dutch and the English or the beautiful products of the declining Spanish textile industry. As he considered these facts, there grew in Colbert a veritable passion to develop in France the manufacture of fine woollens. The fact that such cloth commanded a ready sale at high prices, the fact that it was in great demand in the Levant, and the fact that the French spent so much money to buy it abroad, served only to enhance his interest.

Thus it was that Colbert lavished his most earnest efforts in the endeavor to dower France with a woollen industry capable of producing cloth that would be on a par with the best made in Holland, England, or Spain. The story of his labors is long and complicated. But it illustrates most clearly the methods by which he worked, and the dogged pertinacity of his nature.

*Van Robais*.—One of the earliest, the most successful, and the most famous of the cloth manufactures founded through Colbert's intervention was that of Van Robais, at Abbéville. In 1665 Colbert entered into negotiations with Josse Van Robais, a Protestant cloth manufacturer of Zeeland, with a view to persuading him to come to France. By the end of October Van Robais had sailed for France, and he eventually brought to that country not only all his family, but also fifty Dutch workmen.

On October 15, 1655, a privilege in the form of letters patent was issued to Van Robais. In the preamble thereto the king declared that he wished to treat Van Robais favorably, so as "to attract, by his example, those among the foreigners who excell in some manufacture to come and establish it" in France. The privilege went on to give Van Robais the right to come to Abbéville with fifty Dutch workers and thirty looms and to establish there "a manufacture of fine cloths such as are made in Spain and Holland." Van Robais was to be required to pay no duty on the looms, fulling mills, and tools that he brought in.

He was to have the right to acquire properties in and about Abbéville, at prices to be fixed by a local judge or for what they had cost their owners. The *maire* and *échevins* of Abbéville were enjoined to secure for Van Robais buildings suitable for his establishment, on which he was to pay such rent as the local judge should deem proper.

The letters patent likewise gave Van Robais the right to set up on the ramparts, or elsewhere, a windmill to supply power for a fulling mill, and to build also a water mill for the same purpose. The building workers, dyers, carders, shearers, and other craftsmen employed by Van Robais were to be free of all guild supervision and regulation. Similarly, Van Robais was to be free to sell his cloth, as he saw fit, in Paris or any other city. Van Robais, his foreign associates, and his foreign workers were all to be deemed naturalized French subjects, with full rights and without further formalities, and they were to be free of all taxes, subsidies, local dues, *corvées*, lodging of soldiers, and other public charges during the period for which the privilege was to run. At the expiration of the privilege they were to be permitted to return to their native land with their families and property if they wished to do so. In addition, while they were in France they were to be allowed to profess and practice the Protestant religion, and they were even to be allowed to stretch and dry their cloth on Sundays and minor feast days.

For the use of his employees, Van Robais was to be permitted to set up a brewery and to make beer free of all taxes. To him was granted annually, at a reduced rate, 8 *minots* (the minot contained 39 liters) of salt. For the expenses of his transfer from Holland to France, the king gave Van Robais 12,000 *livres* outright. In addition, the king agreed to advance to Van Robais, as a ten-year loan without interest, 2,000 *livres* for each loom that he set up during the first three years.

To protect the enterprise of Van Robais, the king forbade, for twenty years, all persons to imitate his manufacturer's mark, or to establish within ten leagues of Abbéville similar cloth looms or mills, without his permission. No noble who associated himself with the enterprise of Van Robais would impair his status thereby.<sup>8</sup>

From the start, the enterprise of Van Robais went very well, though not without the continual support of Colbert. In addition to the gift of 12,000 *livres* to recompense him for the expenses of moving, Van

<sup>8</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 182-83, 328-32; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 440-41; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 224-28; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 261-62.



Robais secured from the king loans without interest totaling 80,000 *livres*, and these loans were never paid off, for in 1685, when his privilege was renewed for 15 years, 20,000 *livres* of the debt was remitted, and 6 years later the other 60,000 *livres* was remitted, to enable Van Robais to continue his enterprise. Colbert's interest in and support of the Abbéville venture continued to the end of his life. In 1670, for example, he urged Bellinzani to see that the woolens of Van Robais were as fine as those made in England. Two years later he wrote to the intendant of Amiens and expressed his delight that Van Robais was doing so well. He asked to be informed of the annual production, urged the intendant to help Van Robais, and insisted that it was most important, by means of this manufacture, "to exclude all the woolens of Holland and England."<sup>9</sup>

In 1673 Van Robais fell into a dispute with the brewers of Abbéville in regard to the brewery that his brother had built, in accordance with the terms of the letters patent. Colbert wrote the intendant of Amiens, telling him to investigate the matter and to protect the Van Robais. A year earlier more serious trouble had arisen. Because of his religion, Van Robais had been subjected to interference and inconvenience. Colbert wrote to the intendant to look into the situation and to protect Van Robais, because of the importance of his manufacture to France and to Abbéville. Even before that, Colbert had asked the bishop of Amiens to restrain the zeal of a Capucin monk, who was striving to convert this Calvinist entrepreneur.

A decade later, however, the king had become more pious, and Colbert wrote to the intendant of Amiens in 1681, asking him to work for the conversion of Van Robais, "because by this means, instead of this manufacture being in the hands of Huguenots, we will succeed in converting all those who work in it, and thus put the industry in the hands of Catholics." A year later Colbert wrote to the intendant of Amiens:

I admit to you that I would be very glad if you could succeed in converting Van Robais. As he is a very fine man, it would be a really good thing if he were of our religion, because he is capable of establishing so well the manufacture of fine woolens at Abbéville, that it would thereafter be permanently in the kingdom and would do great injury to the manufactures of Holland and England, and be of great advantage to the subjects of the king.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, *mémoire* on the Van Robais loans, 1692; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 261-62; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 576, 669; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 221, 285, 372.

<sup>10</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 674, 739; VI, 96-97.

Though Van Robais proved obdurate, in the matter of religion, he retained the good will and the support of Colbert. On December 23, 1682, Colbert wrote Breteuil, intendant at Amiens, in regard to Van Robais. The manufacture, said Colbert, was succeeding admirably. All that remained was to see that the cloth produced was of the same quality and size as that made in England. Breteuil was to inspect the Van Robais establishment every two months and to send in reports on the number of looms going, the number of workers employed, and the amount of cloth produced. Colbert declared his intention of encouraging Van Robais to expand his enterprise by presenting him with gifts from time to time, "these manufactures being of great utility to the state." Breteuil was to endeavor to get one of Van Robais' sons to establish a cloth manufacture at Amiens. He was to see that the fine cloth made at Abbéville was like that made in Holland and England, not like that made elsewhere in France. Once again Colbert reverted to the religious question, saying, "I urge you to put into practice, all the time, all the expedients which you think might convert this Van Robais and his family."

On December 27, 1682, Breteuil replied to Colbert's missive. He said that in accordance with Colbert's instructions he was looking into everything which might serve to increase the manufacture of Van Robais and to make his cloth equal to the best English fabrics. Van Robais insisted, Breteuil remarked, that he had already surpassed the black cloth made in Holland, and equaled the gray cloth produced there. Van Robais was, the intendant wrote, very grateful for all Colbert's interest and help, and Breteuil and Van Robais were on such good terms that there might be some hope of converting him. The eldest son of Van Robais had established a large cloth manufacture at Abbéville, in a separate building, but under the direction of his father. The second son was in Spain, and might possibly be persuaded to establish a cloth manufacture at Amiens, though Breteuil feared that he had not been raised to follow the profession of cloth-making.

On January 13, 1683, Colbert wrote to Breteuil to express his satisfaction with the intendant's conference with Van Robais. Breteuil need not worry about a new establishment, said Colbert, if only that at Abbéville could be brought to produce cloth equal in size and quality to that of England. Colbert's exhortations were not without effect, for on June 14, 1683, Breteuil wrote again to the minister. He reported that Van

Robais had come to Amiens with a bale of newly manufactured cloth, and that it had been examined and tested according to Colbert's instructions by Breteuil, his assistant, and four merchants. The cloth was found to be one and a half ells wide [Van Robais' cloth had formerly been only one and a quarter ells wide] whereas most English cloth was only one and a third ells wide, or less. Van Robais asked that this fact be called to Colbert's attention, since there had been complaints about the width of his cloth. The new cloth was well made and of fine Segovia wool. But the four merchants had to admit that English cloth was still better, especially in softness and fineness. Van Robais hoped further to improve his cloth so that another test in a few months would show it to be equal to that of the English in every way. Van Robais asked Breteuil to report that he was "striving to do well." The second son of Van Robais had come back from Spain, but was going to return thither to buy wool for his father. The intendant now thought that something might be hoped for from him.<sup>11</sup>

Van Robais had remarked to Breteuil that if Colbert were willing that the cloth should be one and one-third rather than one and one-half ells wide, he thought the saving thus realized could be used to enhance the quality. With this remark in mind, Colbert wrote to Breteuil on June 23, 1683, that it made little difference whether the cloth was one and a third or one and a half ells wide, but he added:

Stimulate him strongly to render his cloths of the same fineness as those of England and Holland, because it is only this quality that can serve us to decrease the importation into the kingdom of those cloths.

It is not sufficient that his cloths should be finer and better than those of Elbeuf and other manufactures of this kingdom, but they must also equal in fineness, or surpass, if that is possible, those of England and Holland.<sup>12</sup>

At the same period Colbert showed his interest in Van Robais in another matter. On June 10, 1683, Colbert wrote to Breteuil that he would look into the allegation that cloth was dyed black by Van Robais without the use of garance (a red vegetable dye), and that it was therefore of an inferior quality. On June 27, in another letter to Breteuil, he reverted to the question. A shipment of cloth, sent by Van Robais to a merchant in Rouen, had, according to Colbert, been seized by the wardens of the drapers as improperly dyed. Van Robais' process for

<sup>11</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 743-44; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 84. Letters from Breteuil to Colbert, December 27, 1682, June 14, 1683; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 6, 21.

<sup>12</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 250.

dyeing cloth black was a secret, but it had been tested in Paris and found satisfactory. He was therefore to be allowed to sell his black cloth without let or hindrance. Breteuil was to see that the cloth was released, so that the Rouen merchant might dispose of it freely.<sup>13</sup> This kind of protection was afforded Van Robais even after the death of Colbert, for when some of his cloth was seized by the wardens of the drapers in Paris in 1692, the authorities took steps immediately to see that it was released.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed the success of the Van Robais manufacture was such as to merit protection. In 1680 Van Robais had 80 looms in operation, employed 1,690 workers, and was producing annually 1,600 pieces of fine and expensive cloth. Despite his Protestantism, the privilege of Van Robais was renewed in 1685, the very year of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But by 1693 the size of his enterprise had decreased somewhat. In that year he had 61 looms and a fulling mill, with an annual production of 500 pieces of fine cloth in the styles of England, Holland, and Spain. This cloth was sold chiefly to the cities of Paris, Amiens, Troyes, and Lyon. The manufacture lasted until the Revolution. Its privilege was renewed or confirmed in 1698, 1708, 1711, 1713, 1724, 1743, 1768, and 1784.<sup>15</sup>

*Massieu and Jemblin.*—In 1665, the same year that he persuaded Van Robais to come to Abbéville, Colbert heard of two other Dutch Protestant cloth-makers, who had established themselves at Caen and had brought thither workers from Holland. He wrote to the intendant at Caen asking for information about these entrepreneurs. The intendant replied that their names were Massieu and Jemblin, that they were manufacturing Dutch-style cloth with some success, and that one of them had even discovered a superior process for dyeing cloth black. The intendant added that since none of the Catholic merchants in Caen could be persuaded to undertake the manufacture of fine cloth, it might be advisable to aid these Protestants, in the hope that their example would act as a stimulus to the Catholics.

After learning more about the situation, Colbert ordered (November, 1665) that the Dutch manufacturers be granted all the privileges of bourgeois, together with exemption from watch and ward, the lodg-

<sup>13</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 232-33; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 748.

<sup>14</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 286.

<sup>15</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 183; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, Report on manufactures, 1693; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 262.

ing of soldiers, and other public burdens. He wrote the intendant asking his opinion as to the advisability of assisting them by loans without interest. The intendant responded that such loans would enable Massieu and Jemblin to increase their work by 50 percent. Neither of them was rich and though Massieu had recently brought new workers from Holland, both of them were forced to use part of their looms for the production of cheap textiles, so as to get ready money quickly.

On December 2, 1665, the intendant reported to Colbert the results of his inspection of the establishments of Massieu and Jemblin. He had found ~~the~~ enterprise of Massieu in good order, with 4 looms at work. Massieu was bringing more workers from Holland, so that he might have one Dutchman and one Frenchman at each loom. He offered to keep 10 looms going, if he were granted a loan of 10,000 *livres* without interest, for 8 years. The intendant suggested that at first only 4,000 *livres* be advanced to him, and that 1,000 *livres* be added for each new loom he put into operation.

At the establishment of Jemblin, the intendant found everything in disorder. One loom was at work, one was broken and one was being used to make cotton goods. Jemblin was in need of money, and offered to keep 3 looms working on fine woolens, in return for a loan of 3,000 *livres*. Both Massieu and Jemblin estimated that each of their looms would turn out 2 pieces of woolen cloth per month.<sup>16</sup>

Massieu and Jemblin secured their loans without interest, and in addition Colbert prevailed upon the local authorities in Normandy to grant them financial aid. By 1666 Massieu was making fine woolens in the styles of England, Holland, and Spain. In that year it was arranged that he have an interview with Colbert on the subject of regulations for the manufacture of fine woolens in the generality of Caen. In January, 1667, the intendant reported triumphantly that he had persuaded a local merchant at Caen to establish a manufacture of Dutch and Spanish-style woolens like that of Massieu. He remarked that the exemption from the lodging of soldiers, granted to manufacturers at the time of the passage of the royal troops, had caused "some new establishment of foreign manufactures to be made every day."<sup>17</sup>

The enterprise of Jemblin seems to have fallen prey to the disorder which the intendant had noticed. But that of Massieu prospered in a

<sup>16</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 700-3.

<sup>17</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 262; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 772, 776; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 332.

modest fashion. It was still going in 1693. At that time Massieu had 12 looms and a dyer working for him. He owned a fulling mill, and his output had risen to 70 pieces of cloth a year.<sup>18</sup>

*Louviers, Elbeuf, and Fécamp.*—At Louviers, which is still noted for its woolen industry, Colbert likewise encouraged the establishment of a manufacture of fine cloth. In May, 1680, Colbert, in a letter to Le Blanc, intendant of Rouen, said that he was glad to hear that the manufactures of Louviers and Elbeuf were increasing. Large amounts of Dutch and English cloth were imported into France, he declared, and it was "always very advantageous to the state to make within the kingdom goods that come from without." On June 14, 1680, Colbert wrote to the same intendant thus:

I am very glad that you have gotten some officials of Pont de l'Arche to interest themselves in the manufacture of Louviers, and in case they have need of any decree to guarantee them against the impairment of privileges that may be urged against them, if you let me know, I will not fail to send it to you.<sup>19</sup>

On November 13, 1680, Colbert wrote to Le Blanc to say that he was very glad the manufacture at Louviers was in good shape and that those in charge were anxious to increase it. But he added:

I will look over the *mémoire* that they have sent concerning the requests that they are making, but I should tell you that the king is not granting any more extraordinary privileges for those sorts of manufactures, which are at present well enough established in the kingdom.<sup>20</sup>

Despite Colbert's rather chilly reception of the suggestion that privileges be granted to this new manufacture, letters patent were issued in October, 1681, to Picart, Langlois, and associates (who may well have been the officials referred to in the letter of June 14), for the establishment at Louviers of a manufacture of English and Dutch-style cloth. The privileges conceded to them were similar to those granted to Van Robais at Abbéville. On the last day of October, 1681, Colbert wrote Le Blanc saying that he was sending on the letters patent for the establishment of the cloth manufacture at Louviers, for which the intendant had been so long asking. Colbert urged him to stimulate the manufacturers to do well.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685; report on manufactures, 1693.

<sup>19</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 712; "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 242, 254-55.

<sup>20</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 326-27.

<sup>21</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 332. This is a brief summary of the letters patent. Their date is given as October 20, 1680, but this must be a misprint for 1681, as is shown

The registration of the letters patent was opposed by the drapers' guild. But in August, 1682, Colbert wrote to the Advocate-general of the *Parlement* of Paris, to say that this opposition must cease at once, lest other individuals be dissuaded from attempting to found manufactures.<sup>22</sup>

Of the entrepreneurs at Louviers, Langlois seems to have been the chief. But he managed the business badly and the privilege was ceded to Jean Maille and André and Thomas Le Mounis. These three manufacturers trained up four apprentices to be expert cloth-makers, and the four trained others, so that by 1693 there were at Louviers eleven master cloth-makers, and eighty-eight looms in operation. Of these looms twenty-seven were employed in the manufacture of English and Dutch-style cloth, and sixty-one in the manufacture of Elbeuf-style cloth.<sup>23</sup>

Elbeuf, situated about ten miles from Louviers, had, when Colbert came to power, an obscure manufacture of strong, white cloth, which was dyed and made into raincoats and long coats for peasants. Under Colbert's auspices the industry took a new lease of life. In 1667 to the manufacturers collectively there was given the title of *manufacture royale*. Especially after the woolen regulations of 1669, the manufacture expanded rapidly, under the leadership of two Protestants, named Le Mousnier and Le Cointe. They introduced the manufacture of fine woollens in the style of England and Holland, and developed a new type of cloth known as *drap d'Elbeuf*, which was fine, but not of such high quality as the foreign cloth. Under Le Mousnier and Le Cointe were trained up a large number of master cloth-makers.<sup>24</sup>

Some years after Le Mousnier and Le Cointe had established themselves, perhaps because of their religion, they encountered the organized opposition of the inhabitants of the parish of Saint-Etienne in Elbeuf, in which they lived. The people, to embarrass and hamper the manufacturers, wished to elect them to the onerous and expensive posts of collectors of the *taille*. Le Mousnier and Le Cointe objected violently and after some time, in 1677 or 1678, the matter was brought before Le Blanc, the intendant of Rouen. To the intendant, the people of the

by the letter cited in footnote 20, and by that of October 31, 1681, which is to be found in "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fol. 538. The date of the privilege is also given as 1681 in the report on manufactures of 1693, which is to be found in G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685.

<sup>22</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 737.

<sup>23</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693, under Louviers.

<sup>24</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 183; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.

parish pointed out that Le Mousnier and Le Cointe, like any other drapers, were merely working "for their own interests," that "the king and the public had derived no more advantage from their individual manufacture than from those of all the other drapers," and that there was no reason why these men should be exempt from being made collectors of the *taille*. In their own behalf Le Mousnier and Le Cointe pleaded that the manufacture of cloth of Elbeuf had been "established by their care, efforts, and extraordinary expenditures," that it gave a living to a great number of families, and that the king had granted the two entrepreneurs exemption from such burdens as the parish sought to impose upon them. In his decision Le Blanc declared that the manufacture of cloth of Elbeuf was "one of the most considerable in the kingdom." Since it had been started by these two men, they were not to be made collectors of the *taille*. But if the parish wished, it might appeal the case to the courts.<sup>25</sup>

Colbert no doubt approved of Le Blanc's decision if it came to his attention, for he was warmly interested in the cloth industry at Elbeuf. In May, 1679, for instance, in a letter to Le Blanc, he said, "I am glad the manufactures of Elbeuf are in good condition; you know of what consequence manufactures are for the people."<sup>26</sup>

By 1693 the cloth manufacture of Elbeuf had grown until there were in that town 42 master-manufacturers and about 300 looms, of which 35 were used for making fine cloth in the English and Dutch style, 4 were employed for making white cloth, while the rest were used to make *draps d'Elbeuf*. Some 8,000 workers were employed, and the output had risen to 9,000 or 10,000 pieces. But the founders were not there to enjoy the prosperity for which they were responsible. An official who reported on the state of this industry in 1693 wrote, "This manufacture is sustained by masters who learned to work under the aforementioned Le Mousnier and Le Cointe, who have gone to Holland because of religion."<sup>27</sup>

The manufacture of *draps d'Elbeuf* spread rapidly to neighboring towns. By 1693 Orival had 24 looms making *draps d'Elbeuf*; Louviers had 61; Darnetal had 26. Rouen itself had some scores of looms turning out cloth in the Elbeuf style, but not quite so good.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8761, fols. 34-38.

<sup>26</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fol. 77.

<sup>27</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 183.

<sup>28</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.



At Fécamp, another Norman town, Colbert encouraged the establishment of a manufacture of fine cloth, much as he had at Louviers and Caen. Two brothers, Noel and Abraham Cossart, merchants of Rouen and Dieppe, after a sojourn in Holland returned to Dieppe in 1654. There they attempted to set up the manufacture of such cloth. At first the cost of importing workers from abroad, as well as other initial expenses, hampered them greatly. But gradually they trained French workers, and by 1665 they had, at Dieppe, six looms in operation, all engaged in producing fine cloth in the foreign styles. By this time they had come to the conclusion that because of its water and for other reasons, Dieppe was not the most suitable spot for their industry. They decided that Fécamp would be an ideal location, but they hesitated, in view of the heavy expenses that would be involved in such a transfer of their operations.

The plans of the Cossart brothers were brought to Colbert's attention, and after investigation he recommended that they be granted a royal privilege. On September 15, 1665, the privilege was issued to them. It provided that they might set up their manufacture at Fécamp or some other town in Normandy. They were to enjoy a monopoly of the making of fine cloth, for 10 years, in the town they selected, and for a distance of one league round about it. They were to have the right to hire and teach workers, both men and women. Such workers were to remain with the Cossarts for 6 years, after which time they were to be considered as having completed their apprenticeship in cloth-making, even if they went to some other town. Colbert was to grant to the Cossarts a special manufacturer's mark. The king was to give them 1,000 *livres* for each loom they put in operation beyond the 6 they already had. Six thousand *livres* was to be advanced to them immediately. These sums were to be considered as 6-year loans without interest. But the brothers were to have at least 16 looms in operation at the end of 8 months, and 22 at the end of 2 years. Workers brought by the Cossarts from abroad, or from cities free of the *taille*, were to be exempt from the *taille* and all other taxes. All their employees were to be free from the lodging of soldiers. The Cossarts and their workers were to enjoy all the privileges of the inhabitants of Fécamp, or of that town which they should select for their manufacture. Under a penalty of a fine of 300 *livres*, proprietors of cabarets were forbidden to give food or drink to employees of the Cossarts on working days. This grant of

privileges was registered by the *Cour des aides* of Normandy on February 8, 1667. In accordance with the terms of their privilege, the Cossarts secured a loan of 6,000 *livres*, and at least one more loan without interest of 4,000 *livres*, after they had succeeded in setting up 4 additional looms.<sup>29</sup>

The Cossarts conducted their manufacture with some success, although one of them seems to have died before many years. In 1680 the other brother died, and on October 9 Colbert wrote to Le Blanc, intendant of Rouen, about the matter:

I am very vexed to hear of the death of sieur Cossart, in view of what you tell me of the good order in his manufacture at Fécamp. Let me know promptly whether his wife and children are capable of continuing this manufacture and of being responsible to the king for the 10,000 *livres* that was advanced to them; and since these manufactures are very important in the provinces, I beg you to apply yourself to sustaining this one if it is possible.<sup>30</sup>

Eight days later Colbert wrote again to the intendant, in these terms:

I am glad to learn that the Widow Cossart has property and that she can maintain his manufacture, as also that the 10,000 *livres* which the king lent him are safe. I beg you to support this manufacture and all the others of the province, and even to let me know about all the propositions that are made to you to preserve them or to increase them, there being nothing which contributes so much to the good of the state, of the provinces, and of the people, as those manufactures which keep money within the kingdom and even attract it from foreigners.<sup>31</sup>

It seems, however, that the Widow Cossart was not able to maintain the manufacture very long, for in a report of 1693 on the industries of Fécamp, no mention is made of it.<sup>32</sup>

*Sedan and Dieppe.*—There was one manufacture of fine cloths which France had inherited from the period before the ministry of Colbert. It was that of Cadeau, at Sedan. Colbert's treatment of it was somewhat different from that accorded other similar manufactures. The exclusive privilege that had been granted to Cadeau under Mazarin was due to end in 1666. In December, 1664, Colbert received a letter from the intendant at Sedan, telling of the state of the manufacture. Cadeau

<sup>29</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 199-205; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 212.

<sup>30</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fol. 302.

<sup>31</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 306-7.

<sup>32</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.

had trained up a number of cloth-makers and he allowed them to make fine cloth in the Dutch style, independently of him. But by virtue of his privilege he charged them 55 *écus* a year per loom for the right to do so. The intendant reported that the cloth-makers were complaining bitterly and just hanging on till Cadeau's privilege should end. At the time, there were only about 12 looms in operation.<sup>33</sup>

In 1666, when Cadeau's privilege came to its term, Colbert gave to the makers of fine cloth at Sedan as a group the collective title of *manufacture royale*. A regulation governing their industry was issued, and Colbert promised to aid and support the manufacture and even to grant a bounty of 100 *livres* for each new loom set up. Under the new regime the industry prospered, and by 1670 there were 62 looms in operation. A number of able merchants, like Rousseau of Paris, worked to develop it. About 1683 there were at Sedan 70 looms producing fine cloth. Eight hundred workers were employed. Ten years later continued growth had still further increased the industry. There were 29 master drapers with a total of 111 looms, of which some were used to make fine cloth in the styles of England, Holland, and Spain. There were, in addition, 4 large establishments devoted exclusively to fine cloth. One of these was that of Cadeau, which had taken on new life and boasted 48 looms, while that of Rousseau had 62; that of La Motte, 41; and that of Mignon, 45. These 4 establishments employed 731 workers, and were operating under some sort of royal privilege, which, though not of an exclusive nature, required each proprietor to keep 40 looms in operation.<sup>34</sup>

A year before Cadeau's privilege at Sedan lapsed, Colbert helped to found at Dieppe a new manufacture of fine cloth in the styles of England, Spain, and Holland. On November 5, 1665, a privilege was issued to Denis Mareschal, Isaac de la Cour and Charles Le Hure. Mareschal and La Cour were both manufacturing drapers, the former from Amsterdam, the latter from Leyden, though he had been born at Rouen. Le Hure, a native of Montdidier, had become a bourgeois of Amsterdam and was a dyer by profession. The three men had had long experience in the making of fine cloth. Attracted by the favors granted in France to those who established manufactures, they had submitted a

<sup>33</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 696-97; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 242; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 62-63.

<sup>34</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 182-83; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 262-63; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 242.

proposition for the founding of the making of fine cloth at Dieppe. Colbert examined their project and arranged for the grant of the privilege.

The privilege allowed them to set up at Dieppe as many looms as they wished. For 15 years they and their workers were to be free of all guild supervision, and exempt from the *taille* and all other taxes. To help them to pay the expenses of their transfer from Holland to Dieppe, the king promised to pay to Mareschal, 2,000 *livres*; to La Cour 1,000 *livres*; and to Le Hure 3,000 *livres*. If they did not succeed in setting up 20 looms, the money was to be returned. But for each loom put in operation, an additional bounty of 500 *livres* was to be paid them. To La Cour, moreover, was given permission to bring in from Leyden, free of all duty, 30 pieces of cloth.<sup>35</sup>

Sixteen years later a man named Henri Mathieu sought to secure a privilege for the manufacture of fine cloth at Saint-Omer. He came from Vevuy, near Liège. In 1676, aided by a grant from the town of Saint-Omer, which included a house, exemption from local taxes, and the exclusive right to manufacture woolen coverings, he had established there a manufacture of coarse cloth. In 1681, supported by the intendant and by the *maire* and *échevins*, he applied to Colbert for an exclusive privilege for an area ten leagues round about, and for financial support sufficient to enable him to transform his manufacture into one of fine cloth. Whether he secured either the privilege or the money is not clear.<sup>36</sup>

In fact, by this time, Colbert was fairly well satisfied by the growth of the cloth industry he had so carefully fostered. In 1680 he felt that the establishment of the manufacture of cloth, together with that of serges and stockings, had cost the Dutch 4,000,000 *livres* a year. In the same year he laid it down as a policy that no more extraordinary privileges need be granted for the manufacture of cloth. Though he later relented in the matter of the manufactures at Louviers, he declared in May, 1681, in connection with their requests, "These entrepreneurs must not persuade themselves that the king is giving the same exemptions and privileges that he used formerly to give, because

<sup>35</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 247-49; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 109.

<sup>36</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 84, *mémoire*, Mathieu to Colbert, 1681; certificate from the *maire* and *échevins* of Saint-Omer, November 24, 1681; request from Mathieu to the *maire* and *échevins* of Saint-Omer, 1676; reply to this request, April 23, 1676; letter from Breteuil to Colbert, December 10, 1681.

these manufactures are at present well enough established in the kingdom." <sup>87</sup>

*The cloth industry in Languedoc.*—In addition to fine cloth in the styles of Holland, Spain, and England, Colbert sought to encourage in France the manufacture of special types of high-grade woolens, designed particularly for export to the Levant. In 1660 the English were selling in the Near East ordinary woolens, and some 12,000 pieces of fine cloth, to the value of about 15,000,000 *livres*, while the Dutch were exporting thither woolens worth about half as much. The woolens made for the Levant trade betrayed in their names the English dominance of that commerce. The chief types were *londrins*, a fine cloth dyed in vivid colors, such as violet, crimson, sky blue, light green, and the like, and selling at about 9 *livres* the ell; *demi-londrins*, a lower grade selling at about 7½ *livres* the ell; and *londres*, still lower in quality, which sold at about 5 *livres* the ell. <sup>88</sup>

Languedoc had at one time played a significant rôle in supplying the Levant with woolens. But when Colbert came to power, the fine-cloth industry there was in a state of almost complete decay. Learning of the situation, Colbert determined to re-found and develop in Languedoc the manufacture of cloth for the Levant, since such a step would not only give France an additional industry but would also supply the Levant traders with an article which could replace the cash and bullion which formed so large a part of the exports to the Near East. The three centers on which Colbert focused his attention were the old walled town of Carcassonne, where in 1666 he organized twenty-six cloth manufacturers into a *manufacture royale*; Saptès, where in the same year, he encouraged a Parisian merchant named Varennes to found a *manufacture royale*; and Villenouvette, near Clermont, where a third manufacture was founded about 1674 by a company of merchants and financiers headed by André Pouget, this being made a *manufacture royale* by letters patent of July 20, 1677. Varennes himself went to Holland to secure textile workers, and the Villenouvette company followed suit. <sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 122; "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 326-27, 422-23.

<sup>88</sup> Colbert's efforts in behalf of the woolen manufactures of Languedoc are discussed in Boissonnade, *Colbert, son système et les entreprises industrielles d'Etat en Languedoc, 1661-1683*; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 183-84; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 204-7; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 264-66; and Lavis, *Histoire de France*, VII (Part I), 221-22. The following account is based on these, plus the materials indicated in the succeeding footnotes.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 192; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 442-43.

It seems likely that these enterprises would have survived but a short time, had it not been for the constant support of Colbert and for the financial assistance from the state and from the province which Colbert secured for them, this amounting in less than 20 years to nearly 450,000 *livres*. Colbert's efforts in behalf of these manufactures took a variety of forms. He helped them to get organized. He assisted them in securing Dutch workers. In 1666, 1667, and 1668 he had large quantities of cloth brought from Carcassonne to Paris. Part of it was distributed at court, to popularize the fabrics. Part of it was sold in Paris at a loss, to reduce the sale of Dutch and English cloth. The loss (on one lot, it was 12,600 *livres*) was borne by the king. In 1666 Colbert also had prepared and issued statutes and regulations for the cloth industry of Languedoc, designed to secure good order in the manufacture and high quality in the product. These regulations were amended from time to time, and their enforcement was put into the hands of Colbert's agents, and especially those of Pennautier, treasurer of the Estates of Languedoc.

Even more persistent were Colbert's attempts to secure an export market for the Languedoc cloth. For this purpose he harried the merchants of Marseille for sixteen years. For this purpose he created, supported, and reorganized the ill-fated Levant company. "To give contentment to M. Colbert," the Chamber of Commerce of Marseille in February, 1667, sent an envoy to Carcassonne to buy 100 pieces of cloth "to send to the Levant and make a test of them." When the cloth was secured, the Chamber of Commerce shipped it to a merchant in Smyrna, with the remark that it was "fine and good merchandise and of colors as beautiful and faithful as could be made in Holland." As luck would have it, the ship with the cloth aboard sank on its way to Smyrna. The cloth was salvaged, but it had to be brought back to Marseille to be redyed, and its quality was much impaired. For this reason or for others, when the shipment at last reached Smyrna it was found very difficult to sell it.

To facilitate the export of cloth, Colbert inaugurated a system of bounties, which was to endure far into the eighteenth century. In 1667 and 1668 he arranged to pay a bounty of 10 *livres* to the exporting merchant on each piece of cloth sent to the Levant. In 1669 he ordered 16 *livres* per piece paid, with much publicity, to sieur Chauvigny, who had organized a small Levant company. In the same year Varennes, the entrepreneur at Saptès, sent 180 pieces of cloth to the Levant, and Colbert ordered a bounty of 1,800 *livres* given to him, with similar ostenta-

tion. In the years 1667, 1668, and 1669, 9,150 *livres* were paid out in bounties to Chauvigny, Varennes, and Jacques Long, a merchant of Marseille.<sup>40</sup>

When, under Colbert's influence, the Levant Company was organized in 1670, it was promised a bounty of 10 *livres* on each piece of cloth exported. Stimulated by this offer and urged on by Colbert, the company sent to the Levant, between 1670 and 1674, some 2,264 pieces of cloth, on which it received bounties. Thereafter, the company fell into difficulties and its exports seem to have dropped to a very low point. In 1676 bounty payments are recorded on 362 pieces of cloth exported by the company, which had just been reorganized. In all, it seems that the total of exports of cloth from Languedoc in the period from 1666 to 1683, by the company and by private merchants, was not more than 4,500 pieces, while at this period the Dutch and the English were sending to the Levant each year something like 12,000 pieces of *londrins* alone.<sup>41</sup>

The reason for such moderate success in these years may well have been that the cloth made in Languedoc was inferior in quality and higher in price than that of the Dutch and the English. From the start, Colbert strove to improve the quality of these Languedoc woolens. A letter to him from Pennautier tells something of one phase of this effort. Pennautier wrote:

We have found from our experience with the Dutch, who have been working for six months in the diocese of Carcassonne at the locality of Sapdes, that, until our workers have caught the secret, we will never be able to make the cloths at the price for which they sell them; they have the art of making a cloth equal to those of Carcassonne with a third less wool; and this wool, moreover, they spin and prepare with a diligence so great that one of their workers does produce more in a day than a Frenchman in a week. Our workers learn their way of doing things every day.

But in 1671, Colbert wrote to Pennautier that he had been informed as to the defects in the making, preparation, and dyeing of the Languedoc cloth. "This bad quality," he said, had "decreased the popularity of French cloths, while those of other countries" had "acquired a good reputation." He urged Pennautier to take steps to remedy the defects and to arrange for such inspection of the cloth as would ensure satis-

<sup>40</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 150-51; II<sup>2</sup>, 505; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 799; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 287.

<sup>41</sup> Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 185 ff.; Bonnassieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de commerce*, pp. 175-80.

factory quality. But eight years later Colbert could write to M. Rouillé, an intendant, and say: <sup>42</sup>

On this point I am glad to tell you that I often have brought to me samples of the cloths made at Carcassonne, Saptès, and Clermont, and I have very careful tests made of them, and that I can assure you that they are much better, the dyes faster, and that they are even of a lower price than those of Holland (or, at most, equal in price); and I am sending you samples so that you can show them to the merchants of Marseille and get them to send them thither [to the Levant].

Or again, in January, 1683, Colbert wrote to the intendant, Morant:

The pretexts which the merchants of Marseille put forth as to the high price and poor workmanship of the cloth of Saptès and Carcassonne, are false; being assured by the report of M. Guilleragues that the cloths of France are much more esteemed in the Levant than those of Holland and England; and you may be sure that you will not succeed in persuading the merchants of Marseille to leave off the evil way they have of carrying their trade on in money, to get them to do it in cloth and other manufactures of France, except by tormenting them with visits, and by the confiscation of the money which they are sending to the Levant.<sup>43</sup>

It is a tribute to the pertinacity of Colbert that despite the discouraging exports and the difficulties with quality and price, he continued to support the cloth manufactures of Languedoc. From 1666 on, Colbert was continually coming to the aid of the enterprises at Saptès and Carcassonne. In 1669, for example, he advanced from royal funds 40,000 *livres* to Varennes and his associates at Saptès, as a 4-year loan without interest. The money was not repaid until a decade and a half later. Or again, in 1679, through the aid of Pennautier, and with the approval of Colbert, Varennes was enabled to reach a favorable agreement with his creditors in Marseille and Lyon.<sup>44</sup>

*Saptès and Clermont.*—But on the whole, especially in the last part of his life, it was the enterprise at Villenouvette (Clermont) that occupied most of Colbert's attention. In the years 1679 and 1680 the manufactures at both Saptès and Clermont were in difficulties. It was suggested that the two enterprises be fused and aided by royal funds. Then in the spring of 1681 Colbert suggested that the associates of the Company of Cette, which was a sort of subsidiary of the reorganized Levant Com-

<sup>42</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 640-41; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, pp. 315-16.

<sup>43</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 31-33.

<sup>44</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, pp. 56-57; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 371-72.



pany, be persuaded to take over the manufacture of Clermont. He wrote of this plan to the intendant of Toulouse, Daguesseau, and received a discouraging reply. On April 11, 1681, Colbert sent another letter to Daguesseau. In it, he said that he had begun to fear for the manufacture at Clermont. He urged the intendant to make new efforts to force the Company of Cette to come to the support of the Clermont enterprise. It was necessary that Daguesseau succeed, for sieur Pouget, the head of the Clermont manufacture, was so hard pressed that Colbert declared, "I fear he may fall in a few days if he is not given aid."

Colbert went on to say that those who, like Pouget, had been zealous in the service of the king, must not be allowed to fail. Pouget had been involved in a victualing contract for the navy, and Colbert had assisted him and was prepared to do so again. Pouget had invested large sums in Clermont and needed help desperately. Colbert directed Daguesseau to use every effort

to oblige those interested in the commerce of Cette to make this effort and enter into this manufacture, in which they will be doing a thing not only very pleasing to His Majesty, but also very useful to the province, and in which also there is every appearance of a certain and rather large profit. You can even let them hope that, in case of need, His Majesty will assist them financially, or have them assisted by the province by a rather large loan of money without interest, so as to give them the means not only to sustain this manufacture but even to increase it.

Colbert added that he was sending off the letter by express courier and concluded, "I shall await your reply with impatience, and strongly hope that it will be what I desire."<sup>45</sup>

Two years earlier, under some pressure, the Company of Cette had agreed to export Languedoc cloth to the Levant. They had even interested themselves in a cloth manufacture that was being founded at Cette. But this time, Colbert asked too much. In a series of letters at the end of April, 1681, Daguesseau told Colbert of his failure to persuade the company of the desirability of entering into Colbert's project. On May 8 Colbert wrote the intendant that he had nothing more to say on the matter. "I am sorry," he added, "for sieur Pouget and . . . you must never figure in any affairs on aid in money that can be gotten from the king." Some of the members of the Company of Cette must have been more amenable than others, for Daguesseau had suggested that certain of them be taken out of that company and associated with the

<sup>45</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fols. 173-175.

enterprise at Clermont. Colbert replied that such a step would ruin both ventures. It was better to let that at Clermont go, than to weaken that at Cette. Colbert concluded by urging the intendant to do all in his power to aid Pouget.<sup>46</sup>

During the ensuing months Colbert decided to force the Estates of the province of Languedoc to come to the rescue of the cloth manufactures of Saptès and Clermont. When the Estates met at the end of 1681, the duc de Verneuil, the cardinal de Bonzi, the archbishop of Narbonne, the marquis de Calvisson, and the intendant Daguesseau were present as agents of the king and Colbert, to bring pressure on the assembly. At the meeting of December 3 the duc de Verneuil announced the king's desire to preserve the manufacture of Clermont. Daguesseau then made a speech in which he spoke of the attachment of the king to Languedoc, of the great value of manufactures to the province, of the parlous state of the enterprise at Clermont, and of the wealth which the Dutch won from the Levant trade, and would continue to win if Languedoc did not produce fine cloth. The president of the Estates, the archbishop of Toulouse, then expressed the thanks of the assembly for the interest taken by the king in the welfare of his subjects. Two days later (December 5), a committee of the Estates was appointed to discuss the whole question with the royal commissioners.<sup>47</sup>

On December 10 a second meeting on the subject took place. There the cardinal de Bonzi announced that he had received a dispatch containing royal instructions on the matter under discussion. The king desired the province to lend to the manufactures of Saptès and Clermont 100,000 *livres*, payable over the years 1682, 1683, and 1684. As surety for the loan, a new company was to take over the enterprises. It was to be headed by the sieurs Hindret, Frédian, and Thomé. The king was sure that many other leading merchants would be glad to join the company and to invest in it from 8,000 *livres* to 10,000 *livres* each. Thus the loan from the province would be secured and would be repaid in 6 years. In addition, the king wished the province to advance the sum of 30,000 *livres* for the purchase of looms, wool, and tools of the manufactures, without paying any attention to the claims of the old entrepreneurs that these were worth 120,000 *livres*. For 10 years, also, the

<sup>46</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, fol. 556; "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fols. 173-74, 226-27.

<sup>47</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 333-34. Boissonnade includes in the appendix of this book three important documents on this matter.

province was to pay 4,000 or 5,000 *livres* as rent on the buildings at Clermont, to avoid disputes with the old owners. Finally, the province was to pay a bounty of 10 *livres* for each piece of cloth *manufactured* at Saptès or Clermont. Since each piece of cloth was worth from 250 to 300 *livres*, the bounty would greatly enrich the province at small cost. It was the king's intention "that the Estates deliberate only according to the conditions laid down in the instruction." The royal commissioners felt that the decisions of the Estates "could not but be conformable to the intentions of His Majesty."<sup>48</sup>

Daguesseau turned over to the committee of the Estates a balance sheet of the company of Clermont. It showed debts amounting to 750,000 *livres*, and assets of 350,000 *livres*, aside from land, buildings, looms, and tools which were valued at 298,583 *livres*, and sums owed to the company by various of its members to the amount of 224,739 *livres*. The company declared that it needed only 400,000 *livres* to pay off all its debts. It suggested that the province make it a loan of 200,000 *livres* for 10 years, without interest. It pointed out that by manufacturing 500 pieces of cloth a year, and receiving a bounty of 10 *livres* per piece thereon, it would make a profit of 40,000 *livres* a year, or 400,000 *livres* in ten years.

The committee met with Daguesseau and decided that the company's statement was very uncertain, offered no security, and would not be accepted by the Estates. As to the formation of a new company, the committee felt that merchants could not be found to go into it unless the king and the province made to it an outright gift of the land, buildings, tools, and looms of the manufacture, and aided it, besides, by advances of money. In addition, the market for the cloth was uncertain, and the committee thought "that the advantages that might accrue from this new company would not be worth what the king and the province would put into it, especially since there was no lack of manufactures in the province of Languedoc which were long established and better than that of Clermont."

Daguesseau insisted that measures be taken to prevent the dissolution of the manufacture. The committee proposed an advance of 40,000 *livres* to keep the manufacture going for the year 1682, and 30,000 *livres* more for the purchase of wool for use in 1683, proper security being taken for both loans. It humbly begged the king "to consider

<sup>48</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 294.

that the province was not in a condition to be able to make this expenditure, and that the Estates hoped from the kindness of His Majesty and from his justice that he would not wish the province to engage itself for an establishment so uncertain." The Estates made their decision along the lines laid down by the committee and voted a loan of only 70,000 *livres*, on January 10, 1682.<sup>49</sup>

A lesser man than Colbert might have been baffled by such difficulties. But Colbert, while the Estates were still deliberating, wrote Daguesseau to find "some expedient to maintain the manufacture of Clermont." At the same time he renewed his efforts to encourage the export of Languedoc cloth to the Levant. He arranged for the confiscation of some money being shipped from Marseille to the Near East; directed the intendant of Provence, Morant, to announce this as a permanent policy, and to urge the merchants to send, instead, cloth from Carcassonne and Clermont; and encouraged Daguesseau to further efforts.<sup>50</sup>

Toward the end of January Daguesseau wrote Colbert that he felt it was "nearly impossible to sustain this manufacture, either by the old company or by any new one," unless the Estates bought up all the property of the manufacture and turned it over to a new company. He suggested also that a distinction be made between the fine cloth, manufactured exclusively for the Levant trade, and the coarser cloth, consumed at home as well as in the Levant.

On February 6, 1682, Colbert replied to Daguesseau. He approved the action of the Estates in advancing 8,000 *livres* to keep the manufacture of Clermont going for the next 2 months. The Estates were sending deputies to discuss the situation with Colbert, and the minister said that the matter would be "thoroughly examined" with them. As to buying up the whole manufacture, Colbert remarked, "I admit to you that I find this burden very heavy for the province and that if the king wished to take this sum, I feel it could be very usefully employed [elsewhere]."

Colbert then proceeded to expound his plan. The province, he felt, should give some sort of bounty or loan, without interest, to the proprietors of the manufactures at Saptès and Carcassonne. In return, these men should take over all the looms at Clermont for making fine cloth. The looms for the coarser cloth should be turned over to small Lan-

<sup>49</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 293-94.

<sup>50</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fols. 2-3, 12-15.

guedoc merchants, who would be glad to take them over in return for some small bounty on each loom. If, on the other hand, the province wished to support the Clermont company, Colbert said he would have no objections. But he added, "the aid that the province gives this company will have no other effect than to sustain this manufacture feebly for another year or two and at most retard the period of its complete collapse."<sup>51</sup>

Daguesseau came up to Paris to consult with Colbert. By the end of March the plan had developed somewhat. On the twenty-sixth of that month Colbert wrote to the intendant, who had returned to his duties. Colbert felt that the manufacturers at Saptès, aided by the province, should be the ones to take over the looms for fine cloth at Clermont. As to the looms for coarse cloth, there was no need to worry about them, as there was always a market for such fabrics. Daguesseau was to work to support and to get aid for the manufacture at Saptès and to help its members to keep going the number of looms that were actually in operation at Saptès, Carcassonne, and Clermont. The venture at Clermont might be left to its fate, for, Colbert wrote:

Since this manufacture of Clermont was not established by the authority of the king or even on good principles, it should not be astonishing if the manufacturers have ruined themselves in it, and neither the authority of the king nor the aid of the Estates should be used to save them from this ruin, which they have brought upon themselves by their imprudent conduct.<sup>52</sup>

Just what had brought about Colbert's change of heart towards Pouget and his associates at Clermont is not clear. But in August, 1682, he was still of the same mind, since on the twelfth of that month he wrote thus to Daguesseau:

There are no precautions which you should not take against folk who have already fallen into the disorder of a bankruptcy, since the same spirit which made them fall into this disorder—that is to say because they undertook too much and did not conduct this type of business with the economy and care that it needs—it is difficult that this same spirit, which is always in them and which is increased by the persecution they suffer from their creditors, could reestablish an affair which is in such bad condition.<sup>53</sup>

Though Colbert might be hard on the manufacturers, he was unwilling to see the enterprise abandoned altogether. Two weeks later he wrote to Daguesseau that his idea was

<sup>51</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fols. 65-66; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 729-30.

<sup>52</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 151; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 732-33.

<sup>53</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 128-29.

to maintain and increase this manufacture for the general good of the province, and not to maintain the old company unless it can most surely and most usefully serve to keep up and increase this manufacture; but, at the same time, I may say that I am not convinced that this company can serve more usefully than another for the purpose we should set before us, because its conduct of this enterprise has not been good.

Colbert went on to say that the proposition he was going to lay before cardinal Bonzi and the deputies of the province who were then with him, consisted

in getting the province to make a loan for 6 years of 100,000 *livres*, payable in 3 years, to buy the looms, tools, and wool which are at present in this manufacture, and to give them as an added loan to the new company which will be formed, to rent the buildings of Clermont, and to pay the rent on them every year until they are sold, and besides that to give a *pistolle* [10 *livres*] for each piece of fine cloth which is made there, in addition to the *pistolle* which the king is to give for each piece of cloth taken to the Levant; and in return for these things, the two manufactures of Carcassonne and Saptès and of Clermont will be joined together, and all the merchants who want to enter into this company, putting into it 6,000 or 8,000 *livres*, shall be received in it; and as these conditions are very advantageous and are not, moreover, a heavy burden on the province, many folk will take part, and thus there are no grounds for doubting that all these manufactures will continue and increase, for the advantage of the province and the good of the people.<sup>54</sup>

In another letter, of September 18, 1682, Colbert took responsibility for the plan of joining the manufactures of Saptès and Clermont under a new company, and called it "the only expedient . . . to maintain and increase this manufacture." On October 16 Colbert wrote Daguesseau that the sieurs Frédian, Thomé, and Hindret were prepared to go into the manufacture of Clermont and to invest considerable sums in it. Daguesseau was to see that the Estates of Languedoc carried out the plan. To protect their interests, they might be allowed to appoint a *contrôleur*, who could check the number of looms and see that the manufacture lived up to the conditions laid down by the Estates.<sup>55</sup>

On October 22 Colbert sent Daguesseau a letter telling him that the new company had actually been formed, and that any merchant of Languedoc who wished to join was to be allowed to do so. Early in November the Estates of Languedoc met. On the sixth Colbert wrote

<sup>54</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 153-54; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1, letter from Colbert to Daguesseau, August 26, 1682.

<sup>55</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 226, 273, 275; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1, letter from Colbert to Daguesseau, September 18, 1682.

Daguesseau that the new entrepreneurs should already have reached Languedoc, and that he hoped all went well in the Estates concerning the manufactures of Saptès, Carcassonne, and Clermont. Eleven days later Colbert wrote the intendant to ask rather anxiously for news. On November 25 Colbert sent Daguesseau still another letter, to say that he was sure the entrepreneurs of the new company must have arrived, and that the king was unwilling to abate a jot of his instructions as to the steps to be taken by the Estates for the manufactures.<sup>56</sup>

But despite pressure brought on them by the duc de Noailles, the governor of Languedoc, by Daguesseau, and by Bonzi, the Estates were balky. The intendant sent Colbert a letter, telling of his difficulties with the assembly. On November 29 Colbert sent Daguesseau a long *mémoire* and a letter in which he went into the subject in some detail. In the letter he called the reasons advanced by the Estates for not accepting the instructions of the king, "very light and very contrary to what is truly for the good and advantage of the province, there being nothing which could be of such great advantage to the Estates, provinces, cities, and inhabitants as the work which the manufactures would procure for them and the money which they would attract into all the places where they are established." The difficulties raised by the Estates were easily solved. Nothing in the royal instructions required the Estates to accept Frédian, Thomé, Hindret, and Varennes as surety for the sums advanced, nor to give more than 30,000 *livres* for the purchase of wool, looms, and tools. As to the sums of 4,000 to 5,000 *livres* which the king wished the Estates to give annually for 10 years for the rent of the buildings, they should be ample, for the king felt that it should be possible to rent "all the houses of a little city of Languedoc" for less than that amount. The king did not propose to listen to unjust claims of the old company of Clermont. Louis was also "astonished" at the objections raised by the Estates to the bounty of a *pistolle* per piece of cloth. In short, Daguesseau was to cut through the chicanery and bad reasoning and ensure the success of the project along the lines laid down by the king.

The accompanying *mémoire*, which Colbert said had been drawn up in consultation with the king, was for the use of Daguesseau, Bonzi, and Noailles. It contained Louis' reasons for wishing the Estates to "conform entirely" to the original instructions. The *mémoire* pointed

<sup>56</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 284-86, 321, 336-37, 362-63.

out that since the loan of 100,000 *livres* to the company was payable over 3 years, and to be repaid in 6, even though it bore no interest, it would cost the Estates only from 30,000 to 36,000 *livres* in interest lost. As to surety, Thomé and Hindret alone could well be responsible for the sums involved, but the Estates need not depend on them, for if the plans were pushed through, a number of local merchants would be sure to invest from 8,000 to 10,000 *livres* each. In the matter of the loan of 30,000 *livres* for the purchase of looms, wool, and tools (which the old company claimed to be worth 120,000 *livres*), the *mémoire* said, "It suffices that His Majesty does not ask the province to oblige itself to raise a larger sum nor to buy for more than 30,000 *livres* these looms, tools, and wool." The king would have an estimate made of the true value of these things. If they were worth more than 30,000 *livres*, the old company would be free to dispose of the surplus. As to the 4,000 or 5,000 *livres* for rent, the king would force the old company to accept this figure. The bounty of a *pistolle* per piece that the Estates were asked to pay was in no way excessive, since each piece of cloth made enriched the province by from 250 to 300 *livres*. The king, the *mémoire* concluded, was determined that the Estates should accept the conditions as planned.<sup>57</sup>

On the same day, November 29, 1682, a royal decree empowered Daguesseau to determine, by the use of experts, in the presence of members of the old and the new companies, the value of the looms, tools, and wool of the old company, as well as the proper rent for its buildings. On the same day, also, Colbert wrote Bellinzani to say that Hindret had fallen sick on his way south. Bellinzani was to find out if Thomé had proceeded to Languedoc. If he had not done so, Bellinzani was to seek him out and tell him that Colbert felt his presence there was necessary.<sup>58</sup>

Bowing to the inevitable, the Estates voted the sums required of them. They even added, at Daguesseau's behest, a few thousand *livres* extra to keep the manufactures of Saptés and Clermont running until the new company could take over.<sup>59</sup> In return, the company undertook to keep in operation 30 looms at Saptés and 30 at Clermont. The king

<sup>57</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 369-70, 370-72.

<sup>58</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 372-73.

<sup>59</sup> The other sums voted conformed to the demands formulated by the king and Colbert: a loan of 100,000 *livres* without interest, a similar loan of 30,000 *livres* for the purchase of wool, looms, and tools, 4,500 *livres* a year for 10 years for rent on the buildings at Clermont, and a bounty of 10 *livres* on each piece of cloth made.



agreed to continue the bounty of 10 *livres* on each piece of cloth exported.<sup>60</sup>

In a letter written to Daguesseau on the first day of 1683, Colbert expressed his surprise that Thomé had not yet arrived in the South. He hoped that the trip of Hindret and Frédian to Marseille would prove profitable, and urged Daguesseau to get into touch with Morant, intendant of Provence, that they might work together to force the merchants of Marseille to purchase the output of the new company. If these merchants proved reluctant, Colbert was sure that a few seizures of the money being sent by them to the Levant would "oblige them to take all the cloth which is made by these manufactures of Saptés and Clermont."<sup>61</sup>

Another letter from Colbert to the intendant, written on January 6, gives a hint of some of the difficulties which the new company was encountering. Hindret and Thomé had been complaining to Daguesseau of the lack of any market for the Languedoc cloth, and of the fact that as yet no merchants had been found, in the province, or in Lyon or in Marseille, who would join the company. So distressed were the entrepreneurs by the situation that they were hesitant to take the final steps in forming their company and taking over the cloth manufactures. As they were on their way to Paris, Colbert wrote that as soon as they arrived, he would "stimulate" them to carry out the plans that had been made. But he was frankly pessimistic and told Daguesseau to look into the extent of the damage that would be wrought if the cloth manufactures closed down.<sup>62</sup>

At the same time Colbert wrote Morant an urgent letter, telling him that the cloth manufactures of Languedoc were about to collapse for lack of a market. He insisted that the cloth was in "good repute" in the Levant and that the merchants must be made to take it thither. "As they are not doing what they should," he concluded, "we must begin again the searches of vessels and the confiscation of the money with which they are laden." Twice again during January Colbert wrote to Morant, answering the objections raised by the merchants and urging the necessity of shipping Languedoc cloth to the Levant. On February 17 he dispatched a bitter letter to Morant, in which he said:<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1, letter from Colbert to Daguesseau, December 23, 1682.

<sup>61</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 2.

<sup>62</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 8-9.

<sup>63</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 7-8, 24, 32-33, 58-59, 69-70.

I admit to you that I regret to see perishing that fine manufacture of Clermont in Languedoc, merely from the stubbornness of the merchants of Marseille in not wishing to take to the Levant its entire output of cloth; and I cannot prevent myself from saying to you that if it perishes through their fault and their stubbornness, the king will reestablish it by setting up import and export duties for the port of Marseille and establishing the freedom of the port of Cette in Languedoc; and His Majesty will make a special effort to transfer thither all the commerce of the Levant, in which he will have no great difficulty in succeeding; and His Majesty wishes that you should present to them this apprehension so strongly that you will bring them to make greater efforts to do what the king desires of them.

A week later, on February 24, 1683, Colbert wrote to Daguesseau that as it would take time to finish the reorganization of the cloth manufactures, he was to tell the cardinal de Bonzi to continue for another month the payment of the 4,000 *livres* per month, arranged for by the Estates to tide the enterprise over the interim. He declared:

I am working nearly every day to finish the affair of the manufactures of Saptès and Clermont, but I admit that I am meeting great difficulty. I will try hard to end it in two or three days, so as to prevent the ruin of these manufactures.<sup>64</sup>

A day later Colbert wrote Bonzi, directing him to pay over 4,000 *livres* for the month of March. To be sure, the Estates had appropriated that sum only for the months of January and February, but Colbert was sure that, at Bonzi's request, the treasurer of the province would make no objection to continuing the subsidy for another month. The payment for March was duly ordered by Bonzi. But affairs did not progress so rapidly as Colbert had anticipated, for on the eighteenth of March he wrote that he hoped the reorganization would be completed within another two weeks. By April matters seem to have been finally settled, for on the ninth of that month Colbert wrote to Daguesseau:<sup>65</sup>

I do not doubt that the new entrepreneurs of the manufacture of Clermont have given the necessary orders to continue the work of this manufacture. You will give me the pleasure of letting me know the present state of this manufacture.

In May, 1683, the new company in charge of the manufacture of Clermont entered into a contract with the Levant Company, agreeing to supply it each year with 390 pieces of cloth of stipulated price and quality. A similar contract was arranged between the Levant Company

<sup>64</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 70-71.

<sup>65</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 80, 105-6, 125.

and the manufacture of Saptès, under sieur Varennes. The agreements were to run for 6 years. Subsidies were to be given the cloth manufacturers by the Levant Company, in addition to the sums to be paid for the cloth. Three members of the Levant Company were to be associated with the entrepreneurs in the management of the cloth manufactures.<sup>66</sup>

In June sieur Thomé went to Languedoc to take over the manufacture of Clermont. Colbert directed Daguesseau to help him to "surmount the difficulties" that might be put in his way by the old company. On July 22, 1683, just 46 days before his death, Colbert wrote to Daguesseau once more. He was glad to learn that the cardinal de Bonzi had directed the sums voted by the Estates to be paid over, and that Daguesseau had ordered Thomé put in possession of the manufacture of Clermont. "I feel," added Colbert, "that this affair is entirely finished, and that this manufacture will be in a state to increase, for the general good of the province."<sup>67</sup>

*Summary.*—Thus by unceasing attention in the last years of his life, Colbert was able, before his death, to reorganize and preserve the manufactures of fine cloth in Languedoc. He left these enterprises still struggling. But he had given them a foundation on which a glorious future was to be built. Supported by a continuation of the policy of subsidies, inaugurated under Colbert, the manufactures, after surviving a period of trouble and confusion that ensued upon Colbert's death, grew and thrived. In the period of the War of the League of Augsburg, French privateers harassed Dutch and English shipping in the Mediterranean. The cloth manufacturers of Languedoc seized the opportunity, perfected their product, and won a large share in the Levant markets.

In 1693 the manufacture of Clermont boasted only 12 looms and an annual output of 100 pieces of fine cloth. But the manufacture of Saptès, still under Varennes, had 46 looms, 500 or 600 workers, and an annual production of 1,450 pieces of fine cloth, a figure which would have brought tears of joy to Colbert's eyes. At the same time, Carcassonne had 44 manufacturing drapers, but most of their output of 10,000 pieces was not of fine cloth. Between July 23, 1693, and August 1, 1697, the manufactures of Saptès and Clermont sent to the markets of the Near East, through the Levant Company, 3,920 pieces of cloth. Inspired by the example of the privileged and subsidized royal manu-

<sup>66</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 335; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, pp. 190-91.

<sup>67</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 205, 279-80.

facturers, smaller producers in Languedoc turned to the manufacture of fine cloth for the Levant. In 1710, 7,300 pieces of cloth were sent thither. Of these 3,296 came from nonprivileged manufacturers. By 1716 the shipments had risen to 11,805 pieces, of which 2,492 came from the collective royal manufactures of Carcassonne, and 2,375 from 6 other privileged manufactures. By 1780, while only a small proportion of the exports came from royal manufactures, the total shipments from Languedoc to the Levant had risen to 99,468 pieces, worth something like 14,000,000 *livres*.<sup>68</sup>

## 2. SERGES AND OTHER FABRICS

*London-style serges*.—While the manufacture of fine cloth lay very close to Colbert's heart, and while he spent so much time and effort on the cloth industry of Languedoc, he did not ignore, by any means, other types of woolen textiles. The making of serges, particularly those in the London style, seemed to him worthy of attention, support, and encouragement. Even before he came to power, Colbert showed an interest in the establishment of such woolen industries, especially at the town of Seignelay, which lay in his estates. On June 21, 1661, Colbert wrote to his bailliff at Seignelay, "What gives me the greatest pleasure is the assurance which you give me that the manufacture of woolens is beginning to be established in my town."<sup>69</sup>

In 1662 Colbert tried to get the Estates of Burgundy to subsidize the establishment of such manufactures. But the Estates repulsed the project, on the grounds "that the province being suitable for the cultivation of the land and for vineyards, it was more useful for it to have many farm and vineyard laborers rather than artisans." Three years later the Estates refused a similar proposal, on the ground that "it was very expensive, difficult, and useless."<sup>70</sup>

In 1665 Colbert gave 1,200 *livres* to a man named Marin, who was making serges at Seignelay, and who had agreed to train 12 apprentices each year. In September of the same year a privilege was issued for the manufacture of serges at Aumale. It was granted to Nicolas de la Coudre and Louis de Bezuels. The preamble of the privilege declared that the serges made in and about Aumale had formerly had a great reputation. But the long wars and disorders and the competition of foreign serges

<sup>68</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures, 1693; *mémoire* of 1697; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 645, reports on cloth exports of 1716, 1700-5, 1780, 1785, 1786, and so on.

<sup>69</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 17.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas, *Une Province sous Louis XIV*, pp. 191-93.

had ruined the manufacture and dispersed the workers. In the existing situation, the easiest way to reëstablish the industry was to set up the manufacture of serges in the London style, which found a ready sale. La Coudre and Bezuels were in a position to take this step, if they were granted proper privileges and support.<sup>71</sup>

On Colbert's recommendation, therefore, these two entrepreneurs were granted for fifteen years the exclusive right to make serges of the London and other English styles, in Aumale and for ten leagues round about. The manufacture of the ordinary serges of Aumale was not to be affected by this privilege. Each piece of serge made by La Coudre and Bezuels was to be marked with a lead seal, bearing on one side a crowned *fleur-de-lys* and on the other the manufacturer's mark. The serges made were to be free of all tariff duties, save that on being sent out of the kingdom they were to pay the regular export tax. The serges were to be exempt from all market, measuring, and inspection fees at Aumale. The entrepreneurs were to be allowed to set up wholesale outlets in any French towns, without having their goods subjected to market regulations or inspection fees. The buildings connected with their manufacture were to be free from the lodging of soldiers, and such of their workers as came from abroad, or from cities not subject to the *taille*, were to be exempt from the *taille* and all other taxes. But the serges made by La Coudre and Bezuels were to be of the same size as those of London and were to conform to regulations which were to be drawn up.

The entrepreneurs were to receive from royal funds, through Colbert, 20,000 *livres*. In return they were to set up 100 looms. They were then to receive 20,000 *livres* more and set up 100 more looms, and so on until they had received 100,000 *livres* and had 500 looms in operation. The 500 looms were to be new ones, added to those already in Aumale. A loom converted from making Aumale serges to the manufacture of London serges was not to be counted. A *contrôleur* was to be appointed by Colbert to check the number of looms in Aumale, so as to prevent the conversion of the looms from one type of serge to another.<sup>72</sup>

Within the next two years a rapid succession of changes took place in the management and object of this venture. First, a royal decree deprived La Coudre and Bezuels of their privileges and turned over all

<sup>71</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 273; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 52.

<sup>72</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 190-93.

their rights to a man named Le Gendre. Then three men, Berthelot, Rambouillet, and Jacquier, succeeded to all the rights of Le Gendre. Finally, on July 18, 1667, these three men associated with themselves a number of officials, who were also tax farmers, to form a great new company.<sup>73</sup> The purpose of the company was to fulfill the wishes of the king and Colbert by supporting the manufacture of London serges, and also the manufacture of knitted worsted goods and stockings, which had been established by the directors of the *Hôpital général* and by the farmers of the "five big farms."

The company was formed for a period of five years. It was to have a total capital of 800,000 *livres*. The property and effects of the manufacture of London serges were to be valued and considered as a contribution toward the capital by the proprietors of it. The money put out by the *Hôpital général* for the establishment of the manufacture of knitted goods was to be repaid to it, and its existing stocks bought by the farmers of the "five big farms" as their contribution to the capital. The farmers of the *aides* were to put in 60,000 *livres*. Of each *livre* of capital the farmers of the *aides* were to supply 10 *sous*, and the proprietors of the London serge manufacture 2½ *sous*.

The chief bureau of the company was to be in Paris, and the members were to meet every Friday. At Colbert's orders, Jean Camuset was to be employed to supervise the knitting manufacture, lodged free of charge in the knitting establishment, paid 2,400 *livres* a year, and reimbursed for the expense of any trips he was forced to take into the provinces.<sup>74</sup>

The knitted goods manufacture which the company was supposed to

<sup>73</sup> Among the men who associated themselves with this company were Yves Mallet, *secrétaire du roi*; Claude Coquille, *receveur des finances* at Paris; Philippe Jacques, Nicolas de Frémont, Bernard de Cotteblanche, Jacques Polart, and Francois Bertrand Huguet, sieur de Sémonville, *conseillers secrétaires du roi et de ses finances*; Michel d'Amond, *conseiller du roi et trésorier du marc d'or*; Bernard Derieu and Antoine de Benoist, sieur d'Orinville, *conseillers des finances*; Alemandre Milon, *trésorier de France*; and Etienne Landais, *trésorier général de l'artillerie*. Berthelot was *commis-saire général des poudres*. All the men mentioned were interested in the tax farms.

<sup>74</sup> One section of the articles of the company read: "And so that it may please God to give his blessing to this company and to its intentions, which are chiefly to prevent the beggary and idleness of the poor in all parts of the kingdom and to give them the means of earning a living by procuring in France the establishment of these manufactures for the advantage of the state and the public, there shall be taken each year from the funds of this company the sum of 1,000 *livres* to celebrate in the houses of this *Hôpital général* two daily low masses, and each year a solemn high mass on the day of St. Louis, at which the members of the company are invited to be present." "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 327-32.

support was to be an enlargement of the manufacture of knitted stockings which had been started at the *Hôpital général* of Paris and which Camuset had been busy founding in the provinces. As a matter of fact, this branch of the enterprise was in the hands of the company for less than two years. Early in 1669 a new company for the knitted-stocking industry was formed by Colbert. It consisted of Camuset and three other *bonnetiers* of Paris. Heavily subsidized by the government, it was able to pay off the debts contracted by the earlier company, and to buy its stock of goods on hand. This new company will be discussed in the section of this chapter devoted to the stocking industry.<sup>75</sup>

In the manufacture of serges, the company proved more active, both in making plans and in seeking aid. Through Colbert, it secured royal subsidies totaling more than 100,000 *livres*. In addition, on October 7, 1667, the members of the company<sup>76</sup> entered into a contract with the comte de Chamilly, who was acting for the Estates of Burgundy. By this agreement the Estates were to pay the company 40,000 *livres*, half immediately, and half on November 1, 1668. In return, the company bound itself to set up 200 looms in such important towns of Burgundy as Colbert should select. Forty looms were to be put in operation within three months, 60 more by the end of the year, and the entire 200 by the end of two years. Of the 40,000 *livres*, two-fifths was to be considered an outright gift. Of the remainder, 15 *livres* was to be returned to the Estates for each loom less than 200 that was kept in operation in Burgundy by the company in each and every year between 1669 and 1677. Thus if the company operated only 100 looms in 1670, it would forfeit 1,500 *livres*. If it operated no looms in 1671, it would forfeit 3,000 *livres*, and so forth.<sup>77</sup>

The grant of money had been secured with some difficulty from the Estates, and when the king asked for from 40,000 to 50,000 *livres* in 1668 to be used for the encouragement of manufactures in Burgundy, the Estates cautiously voted 30,000 *livres*, "to be employed as shall seem good to the Estates, and not until after they have seen the success of the 200 looms for London serges for which the province granted 40,000 *livres* by a contract made by the sieur comte de Chamilly with the entrepreneurs the seventh of October, 1667." But the Estates consented to exempt from the *taille* for 6 years the workers who came from other

<sup>75</sup> Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 301-2.

<sup>76</sup> Some did not ratify it until December 20.

<sup>77</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 332-35; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 184.

provinces and from abroad to work in these manufactures. They were even willing to prolong the exemption "for good and sufficient cause."<sup>78</sup>

In addition to such exemptions from the Estates, local grants were made to benefit the serge manufactures. At Auxerre, for example, in 1668 a fund of 2,000 *livres* a year was set aside to pay the *taille* for all workers of the lace and serge manufactures who were taxed at 5 *livres* or less. Those who paid more than 5 *livres* benefited by a reduction of that amount, and those who had children working regularly in the manufacture were granted an additional reduction of 5 *livres* for each child.<sup>79</sup>

Colbert continued to support the company for London serges in a variety of ways. In the years 1668, 1669, and 1670, he secured for Jacquier and Landais, members of the company, 50,000 *livres* as reimbursement, in part, for the sum of 100,000 *livres* which they had advanced to aid in the establishment of the manufactures. In 1668 and again in 1670, 2,000 *livres* from the royal funds were paid to a sieur Langlois who was acting as director of the manufacture of London serges at Troyes, and who also traveled about to inspect and strengthen the manufactures located in other places. In January, 1670, Colbert undertook to stimulate the *maire* and *échevins* of Auxerre to a more ardent support of the manufactures there. These had been established, he said, to "withdraw all those who took part in them from the shameful idleness in which they were plunged, and, at the same time, to secure abundance for them." He suggested that not only should the tax exemptions be punctually granted, but that those who did not send their children to the manufactures should be fined. In November of the same year Colbert wrote the intendant at Dijon that he was delighted to hear that the serge manufactures were going well.<sup>80</sup>

By 1671 the company had established 100 looms in Burgundy, at Seignelay, Auxerre, and Autun. In June Colbert wrote to Bellinzani to urge him to stimulate the company to establish the second hundred looms as it had agreed, so that it might receive the second payment of 20,000 *livres* promised it by the Estates of Burgundy. At their last meeting, the Estates had appropriated an additional sum of from 60,000 to 80,000 *livres*, for the encouragement of manufactures. But apparently

<sup>78</sup> Thomas, *Une Province sous Louis XIV*, pp. 193-94.

<sup>79</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 364, doc. 174.

<sup>80</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 273; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 515-16; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 286, 372.



none of this was to go for the serge manufactures unless the number of looms in operation was raised to 200. By the end of 1671 and the early part of 1672, there were in operation at Auxerre 60 looms, at Seignelay 54, at Noyers 20, and at Autun 50. In addition, the company had manufactures of some sort in operation at Gisors, Gournay, Rouen, Beauvais, Paris, Magny, Troyes, Abbéville, Bourges, Beaune, Semur, Chevreuse, and Chaumont. At one period or another, the company started 27 manufactures. But of these a number, such as those at Caen, Bayeux, Carentan, Saint-Lo, Avranches, Aumale, Chartres, and Dreux, were short-lived.<sup>81</sup>

In March, 1672, an inventory of the company's goods showed that it had on hand 2,300 pieces of serge worth 115,000 *livres*, as well as wool, in various stages of preparation, to the value of 114,220 *livres*, and other assets totaling 122,760 *livres*. In June, 1672, Colbert wrote to the intendant at Dijon that he was very glad that the serge manufacture was going so well. In December he expressed his hope, in a letter to an official of the Estates of Burgundy, that the Estates would extend to the serge manufactures the same tax reductions that had been given at such places as Gisors and Chaumont.<sup>82</sup>

In 1673 Colbert could state with pride that the manufacture of London serges had been established in Gournay, Gisors, Chaumont, Magny, Chevreuse, Auxerre, Autun, and Noyers, and he might have added Seignelay and other places to the list. In the next year he told the intendant at Dijon to aid the manufactures at Auxerre, as the municipal officials were not to be counted on. The intendant was directed to distribute bounties to those merchants who were operating the serge looms.<sup>83</sup>

After this time Colbert's interest in the manufacture of London-style serges seems to have decreased somewhat. The original agreement between the tax farmers who had formed the serge company was to have ended in 1672. But some arrangement was made whereby the tax farmers retained their interest in the serge manufacture, though they delegated the actual direction of the establishments to various merchants. In 1693 some, at least, of the London-serge manufactures were still in existence. At Gournay, for example, there were 56 looms in operation,

<sup>81</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 623-24; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 184, 334, 361; docs. 76 and 162 *bis*.

<sup>82</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 334-35, doc. 76; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 656, 670.

<sup>83</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 676-78, 680, 688-89.

and the tax farmers had put the venture there under the control of two merchants of Beauvais. The establishments at Auxerre and Seignelay had been united under the control of a sieur Chineau, who was the agent of a merchant named Rousseau, who in turn was running the ventures under an agreement with the tax farmers. At Auxerre, the serges were manufactured at the *Hôpital général*. The serges made there and at Seignelay were considered the best imitations of foreign serges manufactured in France. The manufacture at Seignelay, in which Colbert had been particularly interested because of his estate there, continued in operation and in receipt of royal aid well into the eighteenth century.<sup>84</sup>

Colbert gave his support not only to the introduction of the manufacture of London-style serges, but also to that of the more common types which had long been established in France. By a subsidy of 8,000 *livres*, he enabled a manufacturer named Le Blond to establish a *manufacture royale* of serges at Soissons. He encouraged the manufacture of serges and similar woolens at Reims, Sedan, Troyes, Chalons, Rouen, Caen and Saint-Lo. The serges of Saint-Lo were particularly important and gave employment to thousands of workers. Through the intendant, Chamillart, Colbert encouraged the establishment of the manufacture of Saint-Lo-type serges at such places as Carentan.<sup>85</sup>

*Textiles of wool and linen.*—Colbert strove also to encourage the manufacture of a number of textiles such as *barracans*, *moquettes*, *ligatures*, *brocatelles*, and *droguets*,<sup>86</sup> which were all made of wool and linen in various combinations. On March 1, 1669, for example, Colbert entered into an agreement with three merchants, Daniel de Londy, Jean Antoine Mandonnet, of Paris, and Philippe Le Clerc, of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. The merchants agreed to establish in Meaux and Senlis 100 looms for the manufacture of *ligatures*, *droguets*, *brocatelles*, damasks, and other textiles of types not manufactured in France. Twenty looms were to be put into operation in 1669, 20 more in 1670, and so on until 1673. In return, Colbert promised a subsidy of 24,000 *livres*, to be paid by the king. Of this, 15,000 *livres* was paid immediately, and 9,000 *livres* was to be paid as soon as 40 looms were in operation. Colbert stip-

<sup>84</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Clément, *Histoire du système protecteur*, p. 59.

<sup>85</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 181; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 769-71, 781-82.

<sup>86</sup> Silk was also used sometimes in the manufactures of *droguets*. This textile was at one time the same as the English drugget. *Brocatelles* were sometimes made of linen, silk, and cotton.

ulated that an inspector might be sent to determine the number of looms in operation. The 9,000 *livres* was duly paid at the end of the year 1670, and three entrepreneurs seem to have received additional subsidies as well.<sup>87</sup>

The same Philippe Le Clerc had somewhat earlier secured a privilege for the manufacture of *moquettes*, a textile widely used for upholstering. Colbert had been interested in this textile as early as 1663, when he had discovered that 2,298 pieces of *moquettes*, worth 20 *livres* each, were being imported from Flanders each year. In May, 1667, he secured the grant of a 20-year privilege for Le Clerc for the establishment of a manufacture of *moquettes* at Meaux or La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Le Clerc was to have the right to use on his fabrics a lead seal bearing the royal arms, his own name, and that of his manufacture. The equipment of the manufacture was to be exempt from taxes. Le Clerc was to have the right to import once, duty-free, 8,000 pounds of wool and 6,000 pounds of soap. Foreign workers in his establishment were to be granted naturalization without further formality. Exemptions from taxes and local dues were to be extended to him and his workers. Protestants employed in the manufacture were not to be troubled in the practice of their religion. In subsidies from the king Le Clerc received 1,500 *livres* to cover his initial expenses and to enable "his son to get married," as well as 10,000 *livres* to assist him in establishing the manufacture.<sup>88</sup>

On October 8, 1670, Colbert gave instructions to Bellinzani to inspect the manufacture of *moquettes* at Meaux, under the management of Le Clerc. "This Le Clerc," he remarked, "is a weak man who must be stimulated." Bellinzani was also to inspect the manufacture there of Flanders damasks. Colbert said it should be easy to establish that manufacture because of the 30-percent duty levied on goods from Flanders.<sup>89</sup>

On October 14, 1670, Bellinzani prepared a report for Colbert on the result of his inspection. At La Ferté-sous-Jouarre he had found that Le Clerc had 9 looms in operation for the manufacture of *moquettes*. All the workers were Flemish save one Frenchman, and two apprentices from the town. Ten looms had been taken to Meaux from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre and would be in operation in two weeks. "This Le Clerc,"

<sup>87</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 366-68; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 186; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 370, 373.

<sup>88</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, ccxlii; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 337, doc. 82; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 221, 298, 558.

<sup>89</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 560-63.

said Bellinzani, "is having 10 others made to give to his son on the occasion of his expected marriage, of which I will talk to Monseigneur." The *moquettes* made were of 4 sorts, called Savonnerie style, Chinese style, ordinary, and new style. They differed in the number of threads in the warp, which varied from 240 to 370. The cost of the looms varied likewise from 280 *livres* to 320 *livres*. The pieces of *moquettes* were 11 ells long and nearly half an ell wide. A good weaver was able to make 6 pieces a month and received for his work 3 *écus* a piece. Le Clerc expected the arrival, within a week, of five master workers whom he was "bringing in from Flanders to teach the French." The wool for the *moquettes* was brought from Avesnes and La Capelle; the linen thread was bought in the markets of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre and Meaux.<sup>90</sup>

On the same inspection tour Bellinzani examined the manufactures of damask, *brocatelles*, and *ligatures*. He found 84 looms in operation at Meaux, of which 76 were making *ligatures* (of linen and wool), 5 were making *brocatelles* (of silk, linen, and cotton), and 3 were making damask (of silk and linen). Fifty of the looms were under Le Clerc and 34 under a man named Duvivier. They were scattered in 16 separate houses. The *ligatures* made were of two sorts, of which one had 1,600 threads in the warp, the other 1,400. For making a piece of the former, a weaver received 10 *livres*; for a piece of the latter, 7 *livres*. A loom for the manufacture of *ligatures* cost 160 *livres*, for damask, 250 *livres*, for *brocatelles*, 300 *livres*. The damasks and *ligatures* were as good as those made in Flanders. The *brocatelles* were better. The necessary linen thread was secured from Cologne. "It could be gotten in the kingdom," remarked Bellinzani, "if there were good bleaching establishments." The silk came from Lyon, the wool from Avesnes and La Capelle, while the cotton was bought from the Levant Company. There were 11 Flemish weavers in the manufacture. The rest were French. "There were more foreigners," declared Bellinzani, "but they went home from jealousy when they saw the French as skillful as they." "The sale of these stuffs is good enough," he concluded. "All that leave the manufacture go to Paris. From them are made beds, chairs, tapestries, and other similar furnishings." From Bellinzani's report, it seems likely that the two Paris merchants mentioned in the agreement of 1669 were

<sup>90</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 155, fols. 289-90; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 359-60, doc. 161.

interested chiefly in the sale of the goods, and left the management of the manufacture largely to Le Clerc.<sup>91</sup>

Le Clerc, aided by subventions totaling 11,500 *livres*, seems to have made a success of his enterprise, even though he was "weak." In 1673, armed with a new privilege from the king, he or his son went to Abbéville to establish there the manufacture of *moquettes*, *brocatelles*, and *ligatures*. On June 11 of that year Colbert wrote to the *maire* and *échevins* of Abbéville, told them of the impending arrival of the manufacturer, and urged them to coöperate with him. In 1682 Colbert also sought to aid a man named Maurice to establish a manufacture of *moquettes* at Abbéville.<sup>92</sup>

In similar fashion, Colbert strove to encourage the manufacture of *barracans*, a close-woven fabric of linen and wool. In November, 1666, a 15-year privilege for the manufacture of this textile at Abbéville was granted to Antoine Carette. He was given the right to bring in foreign workers, who were to receive naturalization. All his employees not already on the tax rolls were to be free of the *taille* and other impositions. His establishment was to be exempt from the supervision of the guild wardens. No one at Abbéville, save Van Robais, was to have the right to set up any new looms for the manufacture of *barracans*. The wool used by Carette was to be exempt from the *octroi* of the city. In return Carette was to set up 20 looms within one year and 10 more in the second year. An inspection of his establishment at the end of 1667 showed that he had only 9 looms in operation. But on December 22 a decree was issued, giving him the right to continue his enterprise. In 1693, 900 pieces of *barracans* were being produced at Abbéville, but whether this was the result of Carette's efforts is not clear.<sup>93</sup>

A more important manufacture of *barracans* was that of the sieur Lallement. Jean Lallement was a manufacturer of Valenciennes, in Spanish Flanders. Attracted by the opportunities offered by Colbert, he determined to transfer his activities to France. In 1666 he was in that country looking for a suitable town in which to locate, for toward the end of the year Colbert wrote to the *maire* and *échevins* of Joigny, telling them that Lallement was going to visit the city. Though they re-

<sup>91</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 155, fol. 289; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 359-60, doc. 161.

<sup>92</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 678-79; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 186.

<sup>93</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 307-12; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 335-36, doc. 80.

ceived the missive, in some way they failed to see Lallement when he came. But they hastened to write Colbert that they would welcome him if he chose to establish his manufacture in their town.<sup>94</sup>

As it happened, Lallement selected not Joigny but La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. The manufacturer entered into an agreement with the king by which he promised to sell his property in Valenciennes and to come to France with his family. On May 27, 1668, a privilege for the manufacture of *barracans*, *burats*, and *camelots*<sup>95</sup> at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre was issued to Jean Lallement and his son Robert. It was exclusive in nature, save that it forbade interference with the manufactures established at Abbéville. Lallement was to have the right to use on his fabrics a lead seal bearing the royal arms, his own name, and that of his manufacture. His other privileges also closely resembled those granted to Le Clerc in 1667. In return for Lallement's undertaking this establishment, the king gave him a subsidy of 30,000 *livres*.

In 1669 Colbert came vigorously to the support of Lallement in a dispute with the authorities of his home city of Valenciennes. It seems that in accordance with his agreement with the king, he had brought his family to France, and then dispatched his daughter Jeanne back to Valenciennes to wind up his affairs and sell his property there. Jeanne had found that by order of the *prévost* and *échevins* of the town, Lallement's property had been sequestered. Colbert wrote to a French diplomatic agent in Spanish Flanders and ordered him to enter a protest against this step, which, according to Colbert, contravened the treaty between France and Spain. Further, a French official was sent to Valenciennes to demand that Lallement's property be restored to him. Colbert was determined, if these measures were not sufficient, to take further steps. He cautioned the diplomatic agent not to let the Spanish authorities hear of Lallement's agreement with the king.<sup>96</sup>

Lallement probably secured the return of his property. At any rate, his manufacture prospered, though much of the capital for it came from the king, since in 1669 Lallement secured a loan without interest of 20,000 *livres*, to be repaid half in 4, and half in 5 years. In May, 1670,

<sup>94</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 63-65; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 142 bis, fols. 847-48.

<sup>95</sup> *Burats* were a light cloth of wool, or linen and wool. *Camelots* (camlets in English) were of hair and silk or wool.

<sup>96</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 63-65; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 335, doc. 79; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 286.

as a result of some sort of agreement, Robert Lallement was given a further subsidy of 40,000 *livres* "to continue the establishment of the aforesaid manufacture." In October, 1670, at the same time he was inspecting Le Clerc's enterprise, Bellinzani visited the manufacture of *barracans* established by the Lallements at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. He found that they had 85 looms, all set up in one building. Of these, 6 had been abandoned three days previously by the weavers at work on them, who had been hired away by a man from Abbéville (Carette?). By December 15 Lallement planned to have 100 looms in operation. At each loom ~~worked~~ a weaver, and to each 2 looms a boy was assigned to assist with the woof. Three of the weavers were Flemish; all the rest were French. The 85 looms gave employment to 774 persons, who were divided thus: 46 wool carders, 4 wool drawers, 3 dyers, 3 degreasers (*degraisseurs*), 4 reelers (*bobineurs*), 6 twistors (*retordeurs*), 400 spinners at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, 60 spinners at Rozières, near Montdidier, 240 spinners at Beguigny, and 8 calenders. These workers were in addition to the weavers and boys first mentioned.<sup>97</sup>

Bellinzani went on to explain that the piece of *barracan* was 23 ells long by two-thirds of an ell wide. Fourteen pounds of wool was used in the warp and from 10 to 15 in the woof. The manufacture had on hand 100,000 pounds of wool, of which one-fifth came from Poland, the rest from Soissons, Saint-Quentin, Guise, and Avesnes. "A good weaver" made 2 pieces a month and received 10 *écus* per piece for his work. The full yearly capacity of the manufacture would therefore have been about 2,000 pieces, and since the *barracans* sold for from 3 *livres* to 3 *livres* 10 *sous* an ell, the value of the capacity output would have been about 140,000 *livres* a year. The *barracans* were sold almost entirely at Lyon, since Paris was supplied from Abbéville, and by cloth brought fraudulently through the customs lines from Valenciennes. Of the weavers in Lallement's establishment, 12 or 15 were Protestants, and some of the spinners may have been of the same persuasion. Bellinzani concluded by remarking, "This manufacture, like those of Meaux, produces a great abundance in these cities by the considerable sums that are employed in them."<sup>98</sup>

<sup>97</sup> This establishment seems to be an interesting example of an enterprise which combined a true factory, where the weaving was concentrated, with the domestic system under which the spinning was done.

<sup>98</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 155, fol. 287; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 371, 447.

In 1672 the town of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre secured a reduction in the sum it had to pay for the *taille*, in consideration of the manufacture of *barracans* there established. But despite such recognition, Lallement's enterprise languished during the period of the Dutch war. In 1677 the Lallements complained bitterly that the prices of *barracans* had dropped so low that they could make no profit, and that the money promised them from the royal funds had not been paid. The last complaint was perhaps hardly justified, since Colbert, between 1670 and 1680, seems to have supported Lallement with subventions that totaled 106,000 *livres*. But the enterprise did not endure, for by 1693 the manufacture of *barracans* at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre seems to have been completely abandoned and quite forgotten.<sup>99</sup>

*Camlets*.—Another textile that attracted Colbert's attention and support was camlet (*camelot*), which was made usually of wool and goat, camel, or other hair, though sometimes silk was used too. In 1679, by the treaty of Nimwegen, France secured, from Spain, Valenciennes in Flanders, a center of the manufacture of camlets. But before that time Colbert had made earnest endeavors to introduce into France the making of this fabric. His first effort in this direction was in 1665. On April 7 of that year a decree was issued concerning the manufactures of Arras. It set forth that before the wars, there had been at Arras 1,500 looms for the manufacture of *sayettes*,<sup>100</sup> camlets, and other fabrics. In making these goods "an infinity of people" had been employed and much wealth had been brought into the city and into the region of Artois. But, the decree went on, the looms had dwindled in number to 7 or 8, and only 50 or 60 people were employed. Arras, once a flourishing city, was almost deserted, and Louis XIV wished to show his interest in his new subjects there by restoring their manufactures.

The decree therefore forbade the export of thread and yarn from the province of Artois, and the importation into Artois of foreign thread or yarn. Markets were to be held on Wednesday and Saturday at Arras, for the sale of thread and yarn made locally. To the four chief merchants of the city, Colbert was to advance, as loans without interest for 8 years, such sums as he should think proper. With this money, the

<sup>99</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 425, *mémoire* to the *contrôleur-general*, August 1, 1684; Clément, *Colbert*, p. 235; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 185.

<sup>100</sup> *Sayette* was a sort of woolen serge with some silk woven into it. In English it is sagathy.



merchants were to buy thread and yarn, and distribute them to weavers to be worked up into textiles. To help the merchants to sell the goods thus made, Colbert was to give them rebates equal to the amount of duty they had to pay in sending the fabrics into France proper, that is into the area of the "five big farms." To avoid frauds and abuses, Colbert was to appoint a *contrôleur* whose duty it was to be to affix lead seals to the goods while they were still on the looms. Only on goods so marked would the customs-duty rebate be paid. No local or municipal imposts were to be levied on these fabrics. Barracks were to be built in which to house the garrison, so as to avoid inconvenience to the townspeople.<sup>101</sup>

In July, 1665, Colbert issued to a certain sieur Palisot (or Parisot) a commission as *contrôleur* of manufactures, provided for in the decree of April 7. It was further decided that the lead seal used should bear the arms of Colbert. Through Palisot, in the course of the year 1665, Colbert seems to have advanced to the merchants of Arras 12,000 *livres*, probably on the terms laid down in the decree.<sup>102</sup>

Colbert used somewhat different methods in endeavoring to establish the manufacture of camlets in Amiens. From Hainaut, in 1668 or 1669, Colbert brought a Walloon named Marissal to establish the manufacture of camlets at Amiens. To him a 10-year privilege was granted, and he was promised a subsidy of 250 *livres* for each loom he put into operation. In 1670 Marissal received 7,500 *livres*, after he had set up 30 looms. The next year Colbert heard that Marissal wished to buy a house, and presented him with an extra subsidy of 4,000 *livres*, on condition that he increase the number of looms to 60. In November, 1670, Colbert wrote to the *maire* and *échevins* of Amiens, asking for a report on the number of looms in operation, and the number of workers, French and foreign, employed by Marissal. The enterprise of Marissal succeeded, and other manufacturers at Amiens took up the making of camlets. In 1693, 3,100 pieces of fine camlets, and 40,000 pieces of a cheaper sort, were made at Amiens.<sup>103</sup>

But there seems to have persisted a popular prejudice in favor of camlets from Flanders, at least as late as the time of Colbert's death.

<sup>101</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 95-97.

<sup>102</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 98-99; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 62.

<sup>103</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 185; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 262, 273; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 585-86; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 373, 641.

On January 14, 1683, Colbert wrote to Breteuil, intendant at Amiens, that it was unnecessary to endeavor to change the merchants' habit of designating Amiens camlets as Brussels camlets. He urged only that the quality of the Amiens camlets be maintained and improved and the price kept lower than those from Brussels. He felt that if this were done, France and other countries would gradually become used to them and they would no longer need to parade under the name of Brussels. He found it difficult to believe that merchants could profitably buy camlets from Amiens, take them to Brussels, and send them back to France for sale, paying customs duties both ways. On January 19 Breteuil replied, saying that the practice of sending camlets to Brussels and then back to France had fallen off of late, but that it was perfectly practicable and might increase, since the French camlets were so much cheaper than those from Brussels.<sup>104</sup>

It was from Brussels that Colbert had earlier imported to Paris a skilled manufacturer of camlets. On May 23, 1670, a contract was signed between Colbert and Jacques Prévost, a merchant of Brussels then residing in Paris in the rue Saint-Denis, at the sign of the Iron Cross. In the contract Colbert promised to secure for Prévost a privilege granting him the right to establish, anywhere in the kingdom, the manufacture of Brussels camlets. The privilege was to be of an exclusive nature, and no other similar one would be granted for 20 years. Prévost, his family, and his foreign workers were to be exempt from the *taille* and all other taxes and were to be free to practice the Protestant religion. Prévost and his family were to be granted naturalization immediately after the establishment of the manufacture, and his foreign workers would be granted it after four years' residence. The camlets made by Prévost were to be marked with a special lead seal, of a design to be chosen by Colbert. The export duty on these camlets was to be fixed at only 3 *livres* the hundredweight. Prévost and his workers were to be free of all interference from, or supervision by the guilds. Louis XIV would undertake to protect Prévost and his property [in Brussels] from the officers of the King of Spain, and to indemnify him for any losses he might sustain from them. Colbert would secure from the king a gift of 36,000 *livres* for Prévost, to enable him to put up the buildings necessary for his manufacture. When the entrepreneur had 100 looms actually in operation and manned by French workers, title to the build-

<sup>104</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 84, letter from Breteuil to Colbert, January 19, 1683; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 21.

ings would be vested in him and his heirs. In case of his death before that time, the buildings were to revert to the king, unless Prévost's widow should be able to carry on the establishment and get 100 looms going. The camlets were to be known as those of the royal manufacture of France.

Prévost agreed to set up 30 looms in one year, 30 looms in the second year, and 40 looms in the third year. If he had 30 looms in operation within a year, Colbert agreed to give him 50,000 *livres* more. When he had 50 looms in operation, he was to receive 25,000 *livres* more. And if he had 100 looms going at the end of 3 years, he was to receive a final gift of 25,000 *livres*. After that Prévost was to strive to establish in the succeeding 3 years 100 more looms. When he started on the second hundred, he was to receive 25,000 *livres*, and when his looms attained the number of 150, he was to receive another 25,000 *livres*. Immediately after the signing of the contract, Colbert was to pay Prévost 3,000 *livres*, to indemnify him for his expenses in leaving Brussels. Thus Colbert undertook to subsidize Prévost to the extent of 189,000 *livres*. But the payments were so arranged that only by succeeding in his efforts could Prévost secure the greater part of this sum. Actually, Colbert seems to have paid out only 32,000 *livres*, and of this 6,000 *livres* was to Prévost's widow (1672), for the entrepreneur himself died before the enterprise was well under way, and the manufacture was soon abandoned.<sup>105</sup>

*Summary.*—On the whole, Colbert's efforts in behalf of the introduction of the manufacture of new fabrics, made wholly or partly of wool, were more successful and more permanent in their effects than such fiascos as the Prévost venture might lead one to believe. He gave France a score of important new textile industries. Fine cloth in the Dutch, the English, and the Spanish styles, London serges, *barracans*, *moquettes*, camlets, sagathies, *brocatelles*, *ligatures*, and a number of other fabrics were all acclimated or reintroduced to French industry through Colbert's endeavors. Some of the enterprises founded with his encouragement disappeared in time. Others grew and prospered and became the center of important textile manufactures. But it must not be forgotten that France had, even before Colbert, important centers which were manufacturing textiles wholly or partly of wool. Boissonnade

<sup>105</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 176, fols. 167-75; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 185; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 372, 444, 640.

quotes a survey, which showed 34,200 looms making such textiles in France in 1669. Of these only a small proportion could have been due to Colbert's eight years of work before that date. Yet when all allowances are made and all factors discounted, it cannot be denied that Colbert dowered France with important accessions to her industrial strength in the field of woollen fabrics. His chief aim, which was to enable France to make the textiles that formerly had been imported, was in good part realized before his death.<sup>106</sup>

### 3. SILKS AND OTHER TEXTILES

*The preparation of silk.*—The silk industry, as well as that of woollens, benefited from the encouragement and interest of Colbert. In the preparation of raw silk a number of important advances were made. During the reign of Francis I the milling (*moulinage*) of raw silk had been introduced from Italy and had tended to center at Saint-Chamond. A smaller establishment was made in the sixteenth century at Virieu, by an Italian family named Benay. But it was of no great importance until 1670, when, after securing a favorable decree through Colbert, Pierre Benay and his sons set up a series of silk mills (*moulins*), worked by water power, at Virieu, Pelussin, La Rivière, Chavenais, and Aubenas. From Aubenas the industry spread eventually to Chomerac, Privas, and numerous localities in Vivarais. For his efforts, Pierre Benay was ennobled. By the mid-eighteenth century Virieu had become an important center for the preparation of raw silk, with fourteen establishments in operation.

Before the time of Colbert, the making of organzines<sup>107</sup> had been an Italian monopoly. Under Colbert, the machines for making organzines (*tours à organsiner*) were introduced not only at Virieu, but also at Neuville, near Lyon.<sup>108</sup>

In September, 1670, at the request of the municipality of Lyon, Colbert secured the issuance of a decree which granted privileges, exemptions, and the free use of water power to those who should set up establishments for the production of organzines as they were made at Bologna. On December 23, 1670, the municipal consuls of Lyon took up the matter and reached a decision. In view of the royal decree "for the

<sup>106</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 180.

<sup>107</sup> Organzines (*organzins*) were a fine grade of double-throw silk, used in the warps of silk fabrics. The twist of the strand was opposite to the twist of the individual fibers.

<sup>108</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme dans l'industrie française*, pp. 297 ff.

establishment of the making and manufacture of organzines in the Bologna style," they felt they should choose some person of "probity" and of "special knowledge" as to the manufacture of organzines to have charge of the establishment "under the orders of the *consulat*." In addition, they deemed it essential to choose some spot for the manufacture and for the lodging of those who were to work in it.

With this in mind, the consuls had "cast their eyes on Barthélemy Laure, esquire" since he was of recognized "probity, ability, and experience," and was so skilled in the manufacture of organzines that he had set up several mills (*moulins*) and had made organzines "approaching the perfection of those of Bologna." If aided by the municipal authorities, there was reason to believe that Laure could equal the organzines of Bologna. The consuls therefore voted that he should be paid 2,400 *livres* a year from the municipal funds of Lyon for  $6\frac{3}{4}$  years. To Laure was to go one-sixth of the net profits of the establishment. Laure was to watch over and work for the manufacture, but he was not to be required to put any money into it, nor to bear any losses that might arise in connection with it. In addition, Laure was to provide 12 spinning mills and 6 for twisting the silk, together with all the apparatus necessary to run them by water power and all other tools and instruments necessary for the manufacture. He was to supply these mills at his own expense, but for each one he was to be paid 900 *livres*. He was further to keep them going at his own expense, without aid from the municipality other than 50 *livres* per year per mill, which was to be paid him in half-yearly installments. A contract embodying these terms, to which Laure had already agreed, was to be drawn up and signed. Recognition was also given Laure later by the central government, since in the period from 1672 to 1674 he received sums totaling 3,000 *livres* from the king.

In the second place, the *consulat*, after having sent agents to investigate suitable sites for the manufacture, had selected the spring of the fountain of Avonne, near Neuville, which belonged to the archbishop of Lyon. The consuls, therefore, decided to ask the archbishop to rent them the watercourse and the necessary buildings. In view of the public benefits to be derived from the manufacture, they further decided to ask the archbishop to arrange for the construction of the buildings and for the financing thereof by agreement with them. On December 25 the consuls signed a contract with the archbishop by which they agreed

to pay him 3,300 *livres*. On his part, the archbishop undertook to pay the rest of the sums necessary for constructing the buildings, shops, and lodgings necessary for the mills, machines, and workers of the new manufacture.<sup>109</sup>

One of the buildings put up for this establishment was large, 120 feet long and 25 or 30 feet wide. It is not clear how many years Laure remained in charge of the enterprise, but it is certain that it prospered and came to be very important. A report to Colbert from d'Ormesson, the intendant of Lyon, gives some interesting details on this establishment in 1683, the year of Colbert's death. D'Ormesson visited it without warning and found it in a busy and prosperous condition. The city of Lyon ran the plant at Neuville, through an agent who was paid 2,000 *livres* a year. He got the raw silk from the merchants, had it prepared and made into organzines and then turned it back to the merchants, charging them from 4 *livres* 10 *sous* to 5 *livres* a pound for this service. The agent, from this sum, paid the workers and provided for the upkeep of the plant. The profits were shared between the city and its agent. The share secured by the city was sufficient to pay the salary of the agent.

D'Ormesson found at the Neuville establishment 48 *bancs à dévider*, with 36 *dévidoirs*<sup>110</sup> in operation at each. There were 24 mills (*moulins*) to spin the silk after it was unreeled, and at each mill there were 120 *roquettes*, working and full of silk. There were 38 women working at doubling (*doubler*) the thread after it was spun. The silk then was taken to 8 other mills to be twisted and made into organzines. Each of these mills had 108 *roquettes*. Four of the mills, though full of silk, were not in operation. D'Ormesson found in the establishment at Neuville 2,350 pounds of silk. He judged the whole enterprise to be in good condition.<sup>111</sup>

Under Colbert, the conversion of raw silk into thread flourished mightily. At Nîmes there were 14 mills for this process in 1661, and 132 in 1681. At Tours, as well as at Lyon, there were hundreds of such mills. Thirteen centers of the industry were in existence in the region

<sup>109</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 299-301, doc. 17; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, I, cols. 640, 707; Pariset, *Histoire de la fabrique lyonnaise*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>110</sup> The *banc à dévider* was a sort of table at which the silk cocoons were unwound or unreeled. The *dévidoirs* were small turning frames or winding reels. The *roquettes* mentioned below were small bobbins or winding spools.

<sup>111</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 355, letter from d'Ormesson to Colbert, February 8, 1683; Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 302.

of Saint-Étienne, and others were developed at Toulouse and at Marseille.<sup>112</sup>

*Silk fabrics.*—Such progress in the making of silk thread was possible only because of great growth in the manufacture of silk textiles. From the first, Colbert determined to encourage this industry, and in his readjustment of the tariffs he laid heavy duties on foreign silks, and put only moderate imposts upon the export of French silks. Royal orders for silk, which Colbert arranged, totaled more than 1,500,000 *livres*. From 1663 on, the silk industry at Lyon prospered greatly and consumed more than 500,000 pounds a year of imported silk. Aided by Colbert, Lyon, at the expense of the Italian cities, grew to be the greatest center of the manufacture of silks in the world. Before 1685 the silk industry in the generality of Lyon had in operation 18,000 looms and gave a living to more than 120,000 families.<sup>113</sup>

One of the fabrics made of silk which attracted Colbert's interest especially, was crêpe in various styles, particularly that of Bologna. As early as 1663 he was bewailing the fact that crêpes from Bologna, to the value of 180,000 *livres*, were being imported into France each year. In 1665 the intendant of Reims was corresponding with Colbert about a crêpe-maker who had been brought thither. In November, 1665, an exclusive privilege was granted to Antoine Le Roy, a bourgeois of Lyon, to establish in that city new kinds of crêpes (*crespes crespéz et lissez*) which he had learned how to make. In the same year another crêpe-maker, Jean-Mathieu Dupuys, enlisted the support of the *prévôt des marchands* of Lyon. Through this official, he was brought to the attention of Colbert. In February, 1665, a 15-year privilege was granted to Dupuys in the name of an associate, Bourgey, who seems to have been a merchant of Lyon whose financial backing Dupuys had secured. The privilege authorized Bourgey to establish the manufacture of Bologna-style crêpes at Lyon, Saint-Chamond, and Saint-Étienne. It was provided that the entrepreneurs should set up 2,000 looms and turn out all the Bologna crêpe needed by France. In April, 1666, the *prévôt des marchands* wrote Colbert that the new crêpe manufacture was giving employment to 6,000 persons. He congratulated Colbert on the establishment, saying, "You are furnishing the kingdom with a product which it was formerly obliged to buy from foreigners." In December he wrote again to say that the crêpe manufacture was giving employment to more

<sup>112</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 176.

<sup>113</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 176-77.

than 6,000 workers, and that 12 silk mills were busy supplying it with thread. He advised Colbert to insist on the setting up of 2,000 looms, rather than to fix a certain output which must be attained.<sup>114</sup>

But before June, 1667, Bourgey had ceded his rights under the privilege to two merchants of Lyon, André Bouillet and Jean Aymon, who undertook to continue the manufacture. In September, 1668, the archbishop of Lyon reported to Colbert that the crêpe manufacture was going very well, and in March, 1669, the *échevins* of that city wrote Colbert that as usual the crêpe manufacture was enjoying great success. Whether Dupuys continued under the new arrangement or secured another privilege is not clear. At any rate, on February 17, 1679, Colbert wrote of the crêpe manufacture to Daliez de la Tour in the following terms: <sup>115</sup>

I am almost convinced that it will maintain itself if the public is allowed freedom to work at it and the privilege of sieur Du Puy is revoked. You must realize that every time I find a greater advantage or an equal advantage, I do not hesitate to remove all privileges; the more so since you see that of sieur Du Puy has not succeeded.

In the succeeding years the manufacture of crêpes prospered in France, despite the partial failure which Colbert had noted in the case of Dupuys. It was continued at Lyon and developed in other cities. For example, at Reims, in 1693, there were 21 looms in operation, making crêpes of silk brought from Lyon.<sup>116</sup>

In the development of other silk fabrics Lyon likewise coöperated with Colbert. In December, 1665, the *consulat* of that city granted to Ottavio May the privileges of a silk weaver, in recognition of his invention some years earlier of the process for making luster silks and luster taffetas. Four years later, when a merchant of Lyon endeavored to establish the manufacture of Genoa-style damasks, the town authorities lent him their support. In the congenial atmosphere of this city, a number of new processes for silks were invented, and great merchants like the Reinons, the Ducs, and the Marsolliers built up important silk manufactures. In most kinds of silks Lyon equaled or surpassed the products

<sup>114</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cclx; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 674-79, 681, 731; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 250-51; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 177, 324, doc. 55.

<sup>115</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 683, 759; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 297, doc. 15; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 694-95; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, pp. 168-69.

<sup>116</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.



of the Italian cities. But it was unable to make velvets as good as those of Genoa. As late as 1665, indeed, merchants of Lyon were putting Italian marks on their silks, to please the consumers.<sup>117</sup>

In comparison to that of Lyon, the silk industry of Tours made little progress. But in the period of Colbert it was still very important and could boast 6,000 or more looms. Though Colbert received frequent reports that the silk manufacture in Tours was declining, its period of actual decadence did not come until after his death. In fact, in 1682 the intendant of Tours reported that the silk industry there was thriving.<sup>118</sup>

Silk manufactures of various sorts were introduced in a number of other French cities under Colbert. In 1669, urged on by Colbert, the municipal authorities of Toulouse voted important assistance to some entrepreneurs who wished to establish a manufacture of silks in that city. The aid included a large house rent-free for 20 years, the privilege of bringing a quantity of silk into Toulouse free of all taxes, and the exclusive right to make silks in the city for 30 years. By prohibiting the importation of silks from Avignon, Colbert created an important center for the manufacture of silks, and especially of taffetas, at Nîmes. In 1683 there were 1,100 looms making silks in that city, and the value of the output had risen to 2,000,000 *livres* a year. A decade later, though the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had driven thence a great number of workers, Nîmes was still producing annually 650 pieces of taffetas and 912 pieces of other fabrics containing silks.<sup>119</sup>

In 1679 an Italian from Messina, by name Jacques Belluzzo, established at Marseille a manufacture of organzines and silk thread. His products found a ready market in Spain and among the weavers of Tours and Lyon. Encouraged by his success, Belluzzo decided to start the manufacture of damask and velvet in the styles of Genoa and Lucca, and satins in the style of Florence. He secured the attention of Colbert, and pointed out that by making such products he would keep large sums of money within the kingdom, give employment to a great number of people (in his manufacture for working up silk he claimed to have already employed 500 persons), and he would injure no French industry, since these textiles were not made in the kingdom. Colbert discussed

<sup>117</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 177, 323-24, docs. 54, 56; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 668-69, 683; Pariset, *Histoire de la fabrique lyonnaise*, p. 69.

<sup>118</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 391-92; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 742; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 178.

<sup>119</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 178, 296-97, 326-28, docs. 12, 68; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 354; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.

the matter with Morant, intendant of Provence. Morant in turn took it up with the *échevins* of Marseille and secured their approval of the project. Just what happened immediately is not clear. But in 1685 Belluzzo appears in the list of the founders of the *Compagnie de la Méditerranée*, of which one of the chief objects was the manufacture of luxury fabrics in the Italian style. As Belluzzo is styled in these articles a "naturalized Frenchman" (indeed his name is spelled Belluze), and since he was not naturalized in 1679, it seems very likely that he had secured naturalization and other favors from Colbert.<sup>120</sup>

Other enterprises for the manufacture of silk also attracted Colbert's attention. They included that for satins at Troyes under Courcier, that for poplins and farandines (*popelines* and *ferrandines*) at Rouen, that of velvets and taffetas at Montpellier, and that of light and mixed silks at the island of Tounis in Languedoc, under a merchant named Pineau. So great did the production of silks in France become during the period when Colbert was in power that exports to England alone, in the year 1674, were estimated to be at the very least £300,000 in value and 75 tons in weight.<sup>121</sup>

Colbert gave some support, too, to the manufacture of silk specialties like ribbons. Ribbon-making was in a peculiar condition at the time, for a semi-automatic loom, which could weave from 16 to 24 ribbons at a time, had been invented in Danzig or Holland before 1630. By the 1650's and 1660's its use was spreading rapidly. But it constituted such a threat to handicraft workers in the field that its introduction was forbidden by law in parts of Germany, Switzerland, and Spanish Flanders.<sup>122</sup>

In 1666 the intendant of Poitiers reported on a machine which could make ten ribbons at once and urged that a privilege be granted to its inventor, since even crippled and blind men could operate it. It was probably some variant of the Dutch invention. On August 13, 1668, a privilege was issued to Antoine des Hayes. It gave him the exclusive right to manufacture ribbons and similar products of silk, wool, cotton, or linen, on looms of an "extraordinary invention" which were being used abroad. The privilege was to run for fifteen years and it was not

<sup>120</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 458, letters from Morant to Colbert, November 27, December 7, December 11, 1680; *mémoire* on manufacture of Belluzzo; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant*, p. 194.

<sup>121</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 34, fols. 82-83; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 178.

<sup>122</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, pp. 254-55; Usher, *A History of Mechanical Inventions*, pp. 245-49.

to be interpreted as infringing on the rights of those who made ribbons on ordinary looms.<sup>123</sup>

Des Hayes proceeded to establish his enterprise at Chevreuse. In the process of assembling his looms, he chanced on two new inventions by which he could make figured ribbons, embroideries, and other fancy products on his looms. On April 3, 1669, he secured an additional twenty-year privilege covering these inventions. The previous month Des Hayes had already secured a privilege which gave him the exclusive right for fifteen years to make ribbons in Paris on the new looms of foreign invention. Colbert's interest in the machine is evidenced by a letter to Des Hayes in June, 1670, in which he asked him for the dimensions of the loom which made several ribbons at once, so that a model might be constructed for one of the royal collections.<sup>124</sup>

By 1677 several master ribbon-makers in Paris were using the new looms, though whether under Des Hayes' privilege or in spite of it is not clear. Opposition developed among the other ribbon-makers. The wardens of the ribbon-makers' guild, declaring that the products of the new looms were not "good and loyal," seized such ribbons and looms and persecuted the masters who were using the new process. In February, 1678, de la Reynie, *lieutenant-général de la police* of Paris, ordered the new-type looms broken and the ribbons that had been made on them confiscated. Des Hayes' enterprise at Chevreuse seems to have lapsed, and the improved ribbon looms were not successfully reintroduced into France until 1735.<sup>125</sup>

*Cloth of gold and cloth of silver.*—Of all the fabrics in which silk was used, cloth of gold and cloth of silver were the most luxurious and expensive. Before Colbert's time much cloth of gold and cloth of silver had been imported from Italy. But with Colbert's encouragement the manufacture of cloth of gold and cloth of silver at Lyon grew mightily, until the gold and silver thread produced there reached the value of 4,000,000 *livres* a year or more. Through Colbert's influence, a manufacture of velvet and of cloth of gold and cloth of silver was established, also, in Paris. It was located first at the rue Sainte-Avoye (1670) and then shortly thereafter at Saint Maur-des-Fossés. The entrepreneur, whose name was Charlier, received from Colbert not only the honorific

<sup>123</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, pp. 784-85; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 346-47.

<sup>124</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 347-49; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 326, doc. 66; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 532.

<sup>125</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 255.

title of *manufacture royale* for his establishment, but also the more substantial aid of orders for fabrics for the royal dwellings, to the value of 200,000 *livres*. Some of the luxury textiles made at Charlier's manufacture cost as much as 1,000 *livres* an ell.<sup>126</sup>

In these luxury fabrics there was frequently used what was called Milan gold thread. Strictly speaking, it was not gold thread at all, but rather silver gilt. Because of its handsome appearance and relatively low cost, it was extremely popular. Before Colbert's time, France had secured its supply of this thread from Milan. But, with his encouragement, an important manufacture of Milan gold thread was established at Lyon. On January 20, 1666, a privilege was granted to Etienne Bourgeois of Lyon, with whom was associated a man named Girier. The document set forth that after long efforts Bourgeois had discovered how to manufacture Milan gold thread, and that he wished to set up an establishment for making it. He was accordingly granted for twenty years the exclusive right to make it, together with permission to melt such gold and silver as he needed. In addition, he was given exemption from local taxes and dues. But he was not to interfere with the makers of ordinary gold and silver thread. His product was to be inspected, to ascertain whether it was as fine as that made in Milan. Within six months his manufacture was to be in operation, and within three years it was to be large enough to supply France with all the Milan gold thread that was needed.<sup>127</sup>

In November, 1667, the archbishop of Lyon wrote Colbert that the Milan-gold-thread establishment was going along in fine style. He repeated this assurance in September, 1668. But either in 1667 or in 1668 the entrepreneurs, Bourgeois and Girier, were replaced by two men named Gallo and Claustrier. In the fall of 1668, so as to enable him to finance the gold-thread manufacture, Colbert secured for Claustrier the sub-farm of the *aides* of the Lyon district, which included the right to collect the taxes on wine brought into Lyon, and on wine sold there by inns and taverns. In November, 1668, the archbishop reported that Claustrier was not giving proper financial aid to the manufacture, and that a new building was needed to house it. This may have been due to some difficulty encountered by Claustrier in taking over the collection of the wine taxes, for on February 5, 1669, a royal decree was issued

<sup>126</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 254; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 177-78; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 371, 1112.

<sup>127</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fol. 263.

stating the terms on which Claustrier held the farm of these imposts, and later in the month the *consulat* of Lyon ratified the arrangement made by the king. By March, 1669, things seem to have been going well with Claustrier, for the *échevins* of Lyon reported that the gold thread being made at his establishment had reached such perfection that his manufacture should soon be as prosperous as was that of Milan.<sup>128</sup>

In order to encourage the making of Milan gold thread at Lyon, Colbert had forbidden its importation from Milan. But by 1670 the entrepreneurs were complaining that the prohibition was not enforced. They wished to secure authorization to search merchants' houses, so as to find and seize any Milan gold thread that had been brought in illegally. This permission Colbert refused, on the grounds that the prohibitions were sufficiently rigorous in themselves, and that such searches always interfered with business. The entrepreneurs further complained that people in France did not wear enough of their product. To this Colbert replied that for twenty years no one in France had been supposed to wear gold thread without special permission, and that this situation was perfectly well understood by all. Despite the difficulties, the entrepreneurs had no cause to complain of lack of aid from Colbert. To Claustrier had been transferred the twenty-year privilege at first given to Bourgeois. To him likewise had been granted the financially remunerative tax farm. To the establishment, at Colbert's behest, the municipality of Lyon gave a subvention of 8,000 *livres*. To Gallo, who was Claustrier's chief aide and associate, Colbert gave almost 6,000 *livres*.<sup>129</sup>

Thus supported, the establishment survived the period of the Dutch war and was in 1683 in a reasonably thriving condition. In February of that year the intendant, d'Ormesson, visited the establishment at about the same time that he inspected the organzine manufacture. In his report to Colbert he said that the director claimed to be selling Milan gold thread to the extent of 3,000 *marcs* (about 1,500 pounds) a year, but that the books showed a sale of only 1,654 *marcs* during 1682. D'Ormesson found 13 workers, 11 from Milan and 2 Frenchmen, occupied in preparing the gold and beating the ingots into gold leaf. The director said he employed 102 women and girls as cutters and spinners. But as they worked at home, d'Ormesson did not see them.

<sup>128</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 682, 756, 758-59; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 177, 298-99, doc. 16.

<sup>129</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 593-94; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 177.

Six or 7 workers were employed for the division (*départ*) of the gold and silver. With this force the director claimed to be able to make 100 *marcs*' weight of Milan gold thread every two weeks.

D'Ormesson was surprised to learn that only 53,000 *livres*' worth of Milan gold thread had been sold in France in 1682. This led him to believe that the allegations as to the fraudulent entry of gold thread from Milan were probably sound. The thread of the best quality sold at 3,300 *livres* for 100 *marcs*. To make this amount required 80 *marcs* of silver, worth 2,160 *livres*; one *marc* of gold, worth 416 *livres*; and 10 pounds of silk, worth 230 *livres*. The labor bill for the two weeks necessary to turn out 100 *marcs* of thread was 400 *livres*. Thus the total cost of production was 3,206 *livres*. Despite the narrow margin for profit and overhead, d'Ormesson reported that a number of merchants of Lyon had showed themselves eager to take over the enterprise.<sup>130</sup>

*Linens and other fabrics.*—Colbert's problems in his endeavor to aid the manufacture of linens were somewhat different from those he encountered in the matter of woolens, silks, and such luxury articles as Milan gold thread. From time immemorial France had produced great quantities of linens and of similar textiles made from hemp, rather than flax. In this field, therefore, Colbert's primary effort was to build up and support an already-existing industry, rather than to introduce the manufacture of new sorts of fabrics. In his tariffs of 1664 and 1667 Colbert protected this industry by levying export duties on thread made of flax or hemp. He encouraged the export of linens, especially those that were sent to Spain to be forwarded to the Indies. He levied high import duties on such types of linen as France was still seeking abroad—fine linens, *batistes*, and *bougrans* from Holland and *treillis* from Germany.

When Colbert came to office, he was somewhat distressed about the linen industry. In 1663 he noted that the manufacture of linens and of hemp fabrics was declining. This situation he attributed to the competition of the Dutch, who were even attracting weavers away from France. As remedies, he indicated a reduction in the export duties on the French textiles and an effort to win direct access to the markets in America. At the same time, he deplored the importation of *treillis* from Germany and *coutils* (a kind of linen ticking) from Brussels. He felt that an attempt should be made to improve French bleacheries until

<sup>130</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 355, letter from d'Ormesson to Colbert, February 8, 1683.

they were equal to those of the Dutch. To accomplish this, it would be necessary to "animate the cities and the workers concerned in them."<sup>131</sup>

To encourage and strengthen the making of linen, Colbert was ready to resort to quite unusual steps. Of these, an example was the suppression of the guild of weavers (*tissiers*) of Le Mans. Some time before the middle of 1666, six merchants of Le Mans formed a company to establish in that city the manufacture of all sorts of linens, as well as fustians and *basins* (dimities). To aid this enterprise, a preliminary decree of June 10, 1666, ordered that all weavers presented by the new company to the weavers' guild of Le Mans should be accepted as members of that body, in virtue of royal letters, without fees, banquets, or other formalities. The intendant, Voisin La Noiraye, was also ordered to investigate the situation. In October, 1666, after having heard the remonstrances and remarks of the wardens of the guild, of the deputies of the bishop, and of the representatives of the sixteen parishes of the town, La Noiraye made his report. As a result of his recommendations, a decree of the Council of Commerce of March 3, 1667, set forth that the establishment of the new weaving enterprise would be of great value to Le Mans, and that the existence of the weavers' guild was an obstacle to its success. The decree therefore dissolved the guild and threw the weaving of linens, *basins* (dimities), and fustians open to all comers, as it was in Laval, Chateau-Gontier, and Alençon. A hint that some local opposition to the new company was expected is contained in the further provision that the *tailles* of the six merchants were not to be increased, save by order of the intendant.<sup>132</sup>

But to encourage the establishment in France of the manufacture of types of linen not already made in the country, Colbert was prepared to give the same sort of direct aid as he extended to the entrepreneurs of other new manufactures. For example, on February 28, 1669, Colbert entered into an agreement with Abraham du Val, a bourgeois of Paris, by which Colbert was to pay over to du Val 20,000 *livres*, while du Val undertook to have in operation by the end of the year 150 looms for the making of fine linens in the Dutch style. This meant that du Val would have to add 68 looms to those which he already had going, for he had 50 working at Bulles, Clermont-en-Beauvoisis, and near-by places, 20 at Louviers, 8 at Laval, and 4 at Chateau-Gontier. If du Val were to die, his widow and heirs were not to be bound by the agree-

<sup>131</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 189; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, cclviii-cclix, cclxi, cclxii.

<sup>132</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 319-21.

ment. Colbert was to pay one-half of the 20,000 *livres* immediately, one-half on December 31, 1669. By February 7, 1670, du Val had in operation the requisite number of looms, and Colbert had arranged for the payment of the second installment of 10,000 *livres*.<sup>133</sup>

Colbert was also anxious to use money raised locally for the encouragement of linen-making. When in 1670-71 the Estates of Burgundy were persuaded to appropriate from 60,000 to 80,000 *livres* to aid manufactures, Colbert wrote (June 30, 1671) to Bellinzani to urge him to investigate the possibility of using part of this money to stimulate the growing of flax and the manufacture of linen in the province. He directed Bellinzani to make agreements with local officials on the subject. When this was done, Colbert said he would send spinners and weavers to Burgundy from Normandy and Picardy. If there were any choice in localities, Bellinzani was to select towns which had no vineyards, "wine being a great hindrance to work."<sup>134</sup>

A linen manufacture was, indeed, started at Auxerre, at the suggestion of Colbert, by a man named Chapponel, with the financial aid of the Burgundian Estates. Other establishments for making fine linen were founded at Bresle, Louviers, and Laval, and at Morée near Vendôme. A *manufacture royale* of high grade *coutils* was set up at Saint-Quentin and its entrepreneur, Léger, secured a royal subsidy of 7,500 *livres*. Similar manufactures were established at Avranches and Montmorin. In 1665 a merchant named Pineau secured a privilege for founding a manufacture of German-style linen at Toulouse. At Sedan, Quentin Courbé organized a manufacture of fine linen thread, which so prospered that in 1693 it employed 150 persons and turned out 15,000 pounds of thread a year.

Though much was done to introduce the making of new kinds of linen into France, still it was largely of the products of the older French establishments that the English merchants were complaining in 1674, when they insisted that French linen was imported into England each year, to the value of £500,000. Indeed the output of the linen centers that owed not their origin, but at most some portion of their prosperity to Colbert, reached large proportions. The regions of Saint-Quentin and Péronne produced 40,000 pieces of linen or more each year, those of Abbéville and Picquigny more than 10,000 pieces, that of Beauvais

<sup>133</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 364-65; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 370.

<sup>134</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 623-25.



some 30,000 pieces. The linens made annually in the generality of Rouen were valued at 5,000,000 *livres*, while linens brought 13,000,000 *livres* a year into Brittany. Linen was also produced in noteworthy quantities in Poitou, Maine, Anjou, Artois, Picardy, and Champagne.<sup>135</sup>

Thus it was that Colbert could add only here and there to the already-extensive linen industry in France. But he interested himself in every phase of it, from the sowing of the flax to the sale of French linen in Peru. He had noted in 1663, for instance, that it would be advantageous to improve French bleacheries, and this he set out to do. He strove to increase the output of the bleacheries of the newly acquired cities of French Flanders—Lille, Menin, and Courtrai. On October 10, 1665, he secured the issuance of a privilege for a royal bleachery at Garches, near Saint-Denis. The proprietor was Jean Mullot, sieur de Bessancourt. The privilege granted to him the right to take linens in and out of Paris without payment of any fees or dues, freedom from the *taille* for himself, his associates, and ten employees if they had not been paying them before, and permission to place on his establishment a sign bearing the royal arms and the legend, *Fabrique, Burie et Blancherie Royale de toutes Toilles*.<sup>136</sup>

In the ensuing months Mullot bought, at Garches, land through which flowed a stream called the Coudrée (given also as Croudée). There he set up buildings and got everything in readiness, despite the opposition of certain individuals who sought to thwart him. In all, Mullot spent some 200,000 *livres* on his enterprise. But when he was about to begin operations, he was prevented from doing so, since the ill-intentioned persons who had hindered him earlier, now turned the course of the Coudrée so that it no longer flowed through Mullot's land. Mullot straightway appealed to the king, on the grounds that the Coudrée had flowed from time immemorial through the land he had bought, and that without the water his whole enterprise would be ruined. To relieve the harassed entrepreneur, the Council of State on May 8, 1666, issued a decree ordering that the Coudrée be returned "to its ordinary bed."<sup>137</sup>

Another privilege for a bleachery was issued on August 7, 1666. Two years earlier Moé Camyn, Louis Camyn, and André Guérault had established the manufacture of linen and hemp fabrics at Abbéville, in virtue

<sup>135</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 189-91; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 34, fols. 82-83.

<sup>136</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 211-13.

<sup>137</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 215-18.

of a royal decree. Their enterprise had prospered, and they had come to feel the need of a bleachery. But they hesitated to start one without special privileges, because the expense was so heavy. The matter was brought to Colbert's attention and upon his recommendation they were given a twenty-year privilege by which all other persons were forbidden to start new bleacheries at Abbéville, although all those in existence at the time were to be permitted to go on. The privilege confirmed Louis Camyn as perpetual proprietor of some land he had bought from a convent and forbade the convent to try to get it back. The entrepreneurs were furthermore freed from local dues and duties and from the lodging of soldiers. They were given the right to build a brewery for their workers, and to put over the door of their bleachery a sign with the royal arms on it and the words *Blanchisserie royale*.<sup>138</sup>

Not many months after the privilege for the bleachery at Abbéville was granted, two brothers, Noël and Gratien Enguerran, applied for a similar privilege for a bleachery at Magny, near La-Ferté-Macé in the diocese of Le Mans. They urged in their *placet* that they understood the Dutch secret of bleaching, that a bleachery would give work to many poor folk who were "dying for lack of employment," and that such an establishment would save for France much money which was ordinarily sent to Holland to pay for the bleaching done there. The Enguerrans were anxious that their bleachery secure the right to be called a *Blanchirie royale*. The *placet* was brought before Colbert, and on its margin he wrote, "The king can grant this privilege without exclusion of similar establishments."<sup>139</sup>

In due course, in November, 1667, the Enguerrans secured their privilege. It granted the right of *committimus*, fiscal exemptions for themselves and their workers, and the right to use on the door of their establishment the title, *Fabrique, burie et blancherie royale de toutes sortes de toiles*. Either the letters patent of the privilege or other letters issued thereafter gave the Enguerran's permission to sell in Paris the cloth they bleached, for the brothers later had to appeal to the king to support them against the *six corps* of merchants of Paris who were opposing the verification of the letters patent which granted this permission.<sup>140</sup>

Another kind of encouragement was extended by Colbert to the

<sup>138</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 293-96.

<sup>139</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fol. 237.

<sup>140</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 342-43, doc. 103; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fol. 234.

bleacheries at Ath, in 1669. At the request of the bleachers of this place, Colbert, in the middle of June, secured from the king a reduction of the duties on linen brought from Ghent to Ath to be bleached, from 4 *livres* to 1 *livre*, 10 *sous* the hundredweight. The action may conceivably have been ill-advised, for on July 4, 1669, the intendant at Lille wrote Colbert that his efforts to build up the bleacheries at Ath might greatly injure those at Courtrai and Menin.<sup>141</sup>

In 1669, likewise, still another privilege for a bleachery was issued. It went to a man named Guillon, for an establishment at Toulouse. Supported by Colbert attempts were made to establish the bleaching of hemp fabrics in Burgundy at Cravant and at Semur. Meanwhile, the old established bleacheries in Maine and in the region of Beauvais greatly increased their output. Those in the latter area came to bleach as many as 30,000 pieces of linen a year.<sup>142</sup>

When Colbert suppressed the guild of *tisseurs* at Le Mans, he was bent on encouraging the manufacture there not only of linens, but also of fustians and *basins* (dimities), in both of which textiles cotton was an important component. Colbert sought to stimulate the production of these same textiles in other places also. Late in 1668, or early in 1669, Charles Beguin and Simeon Barat, merchants of Paris, secured a privilege in the form of letters patent for the manufacture of *basins* and fustians in the style of Flanders, Holland, and England. On February 1, 1669, these entrepreneurs entered into an agreement with Colbert by which they promised to have 40 looms in operation within a year. In return they were to secure an immediate gift of 6,000 *livres* from the king, and in addition Colbert promised them a bounty of 40 *livres* for each loom actually put in operation. In July, 1668, Colbert had given Beguin and Barat 1,000 *livres* to help pay the expense of securing workers from Holland. In February, 1669, he paid them the 6,000 *livres* as he had promised, and in addition gave Beguin 6,093 *livres* for his work and expenses in recruiting manufacturers and weavers of *ligatures* and *brocatelles* in Flanders.<sup>143</sup>

Two years later (February 17, 1671) a certain Pierre Guichard secured a privilege for the manufacture of *basins* at Saint-Quentin. One of the reasons advanced for granting him special advantages was that

<sup>141</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 135-36; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 63-66.

<sup>142</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 194.

<sup>143</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," fols. 362-63; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 286, 370-71.

he had made it clear that the manufacture of *basins* and similar cotton and linen fabrics had never been established in France. This statement may indicate that the earlier attempts to produce *basins* had collapsed. Or it may simply have found its way into the privilege because no one took the trouble to check the matter. As an additional reason for granting help to Guichard, the privilege pointed out that he had been forced to spend great sums to attract foreign workers and to build the necessary looms. "This manufacture," continued the document, "is of great utility to the public, a number of persons who were formerly useless finding employment in it." The privilege gave to Guichard the exclusive right to manufacture *basins* and similar fabrics in Saint-Quentin and for 10 leagues round about. But the exclusion was not to operate against anyone who was already engaged in making such textiles in that area. The king undertook to give Guichard 12,000 *livres*, to be paid at Colbert's orders, half immediately, and half if the entrepreneur had 40 looms in operation before the end of 1672. Further, Guichard and his associates were to be free of the lodging of soldiers, their foreign workers were to be given naturalization after 6 years, and Guichard was not to be held to pay an amount for the *taille* greater than that which he had paid in 1670.<sup>144</sup>

Colbert sought further to encourage the manufacture of cotton textiles by levying heavy duties on their importation, and light duties on their exportation and on the importation of raw cotton. The manufacture of fustians prospered at Lyon, Montpellier, Nîmes, Troyes, and Strasbourg. *Basins* of the common sort were made at Rouen, Troyes, Lyon, and in Beaujolais. In the years just before Colbert's death, the manufacture of calico in imitation of the eastern product, and of the English imitation thereof, was begun.<sup>145</sup>

Quite different from the light cotton textiles was another fabric, of which the manufacture was encouraged in this period. It was one made of beaver fur. On October 12, 1663, a privilege was granted to Jean des Rousseaux, a merchant of Paris. The privilege was limited in scope and, since Rousseaux felt that it was adequate to cover only the period of the initial tests, and since these tests had been interrupted by illness among the workers, he applied in 1665 for a broader grant of advantages. In June of that year a decree of the Council of State granted to Rousseaux

<sup>144</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 850-51; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 373

<sup>145</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 191.

the monopoly for twenty years, in all France, of the manufacture of cloth made from beaver fur or other types of hair not previously used for textiles in the country. The manufacture was to be set up at Pont-l'Abbé (?Ponthabbé) near Brouage. To Rousseau were to be given the right to bring in foreign workers and also the other privileges usually granted to such new enterprises. But Rousseaux was to be required to put into operation six new looms each year for six years.<sup>146</sup>

A royal declaration of July 12, 1665, enumerated more specifically the "usual" privileges granted to Rousseaux. They were to include naturalization for his foreign workers after eight years; the status of masters for those who worked under Rousseaux for six years as apprentices and two years as journeymen; freedom from customs and transit duties on raw materials, including dyes, and on the manufactured products, if they bore a special mark to be arranged by Colbert; and exemption from the *taille* and other taxes, and from the lodging of soldiers, for Rousseaux and such of his employees as lived and worked in the buildings of the manufacture, and who had not previously paid the *taille* in that district.<sup>147</sup>

Rousseaux seems soon to have become aware of his inability to finance the beaver-cloth project. On August 6, 1665, he took into partnership a certain sieur Baron, who was to supply three-fourths of the capital for the undertaking. On the same day Rousseaux was forced to admit that he could not see his way clear to set up the manufacture, unless the king advanced 100,000 *livres* toward it. Baron decided, consequently, to endeavor to secure for himself the privileges which had been granted to Rousseau. He made application for that purpose, relating what had happened between himself and Rousseau, and offering to live up to the obligations to which Rousseaux had agreed, provided that he were given the same privileges, plus the right to manufacture other kinds of cloth at his establishments, and the right to have nobles join him in the enterprise without impairment of their status. By letters patent of February 17, 1666, Baron secured what he asked for. All Rousseaux's privileges were transferred to him, and he was granted the two additional ones.<sup>148</sup>

Another manufacture based on the fur of the beaver was that of beaver hats. Colbert, in 1665, granted a monopoly on the manufacture

<sup>146</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 174-76.

<sup>147</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 177-80.

<sup>148</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 182-83.

of beaver hats, which had been established at Paris, and gave it further protection by means of customs duties. The beaver-hat manufacture grew rapidly. In similar fashion Colbert aided the production of hats made from vicuna wool.<sup>149</sup>

Though Colbert's interest in the dyeing and finishing of textiles was manifested chiefly through his regulations, a number of privileges for special dyeing processes were issued, none the less. For example, in 1662 a privilege was granted to Abraham and Jean Kuffeler for a new method of dyeing fabrics scarlet with cochineal. The color produced by this process was so fast that it was not impaired by being dipped in vinegar or lemon juice. The Kuffelers were to be allowed to set up their dyeing plant anywhere, save on the stream of the Gobelins. Or again, foreign dyers were granted privileges if they came to establish themselves in France. For instance, on October 8, 1666, a privilege was issued to three sets of brothers who came from Amsterdam, and were bleachers and dyers by profession. They were François and Jacob Vander-capelle, Jean, Abraham and Tuynau (?) Vauhémontées, and Gaspard and Abraham Bringman. Attracted by the favors offered in France, they had associated themselves together and made known their desire to come to that country. Colbert investigated the case, and on his recommendation they were given the right to set up a bleachery and dye works in Rouen or elsewhere. They were to have granted them a special mark to put on the fabrics they dyed. They and their families were to be given naturalization and the status of bourgeois and masters of their trades. They were to be exempt from all taxes, dues, and *tailles*, and they were to be allowed to make beer free from all duties. To reimburse them for the expenses of moving to France, they were to be given 3,000 *livres* from royal funds. In a similar fashion, in 1667 Colbert brought J. Glüg from Amsterdam and granted him a twenty-year privilege, under which he set up dye works first at Paris and later at Lyon.<sup>150</sup>

*Summary.*—Though Colbert's efforts to encourage the manufacture and finishing of textiles made of linen, cotton, silk, or fur were not, perhaps, so important as the pains he lavished on the woolen industry, there can be little doubt that under his tutelage the manufacture of a number of new types of fabrics took root in France, and the production of goods already made there was strengthened. It is clear, for instance,

<sup>149</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 187.

<sup>150</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 300-1; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 194, 341-42, doc. 99.

that the French silk industry under Colbert prospered mightily and began its conquest of the world's markets.

#### 4. STOCKINGS

In early modern times stockings seem to have been made of pieces of goods—serges, silks, and the like, cut to shape. But a better-fitting hose was produced in the sixteenth century by knitting the stocking to shape. In the seventeenth century this procedure became so common that the older type was practically banished from the market. Knitting was suitable ~~not~~ only for the making of woolen stockings from worsteds of various sorts, but also for the manufacture of silk hosiery. This technique of stocking manufacture was profoundly modified, however, by the introduction of the stocking frame. A lock-maker of Caen may have invented such a device in the sixteenth century. But the stocking frame is usually attributed to William Lee, curate of Calverton, a little town near Nottingham in England. One of the dates assigned to this invention is 1589.

The story runs that William Lee, together with nine workers and nine frames, was brought to France through the patronage of Henry IV after 1603, and that stocking-making by means of the new device was carried on successfully at Rouen for some years. Ruined by the death of Henry IV, Lee seems to have died at Paris in 1610. Seven of his workers are supposed to have returned to England and two to have continued at Rouen. It is also barely possible that similar frames were introduced at Nîmes about 1646. It is fairly clear, however, that by 1650 stocking frames were firmly and successfully established in England, but not in France. As to the question of invention, it is quite possible that the stocking frame was the work of several men, for it was the most complex machine in industrial use before the eighteenth century. It consisted of 3,500 pieces of metal, took 50 days to make, and 10 or 12 days to assemble. Neither the stockings made on the frame nor those made by hand were very dainty objects, by modern standards. Fine wool stockings weighed from 4 to 6 ounces a pair, ordinary ones from 7 to 9 ounces. Fine silk stockings for men weighed from 3½ to 7 ounces a pair, and for women from 3 to 5 ounces.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, pp. 263–64; Bondois, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665–1683," pp. 275 ff.; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1456, memorandum on stockings, n.d.; Usher, *History of Mechanical Inventions*, pp. 240–45; *Recueil des règlements*, IV, 1–2.

By 1656, as pointed out in Chapter V above, Jean Hindret had brought the stocking frame to France, secured an exclusive privilege for the manufacture by it of stockings and like articles, and set up an establishment at the Château de Madrid. There, despite a certain lack of business sense on Hindret's part, the manufacture slowly grew. Thus when Colbert came to power, there was a small manufacture of frame-made stockings at the Château de Madrid, as well as a scattered household production of knitted stockings. Both were threatened by rising importations of wool and of silk stockings from England and of wool stockings from the Channel Islands. On wool stockings, therefore, Colbert raised the import duties from 2 *livres*, 10 *sous*, 6 *deniers* a dozen to 3 *livres*, 10 *sous* a dozen (1667). His tariff policy on silk stockings was not so forthright. He reduced the rate from 2 *livres*, 7 *sous*, 3 *deniers* a pair to 15 *sous* a pair (1664), then raised it to 2 *livres* a pair (1667). The explanation for the hesitancy in the matter of silk stockings is not far to seek. In 1664 Hindret's production was limited and his enterprise in difficulties. But in 1666 the establishment was reorganized and put on a sounder basis.<sup>152</sup>

Tariff protection was, however, only a minor part of Colbert's stocking policy. With both silk and woollen stockings he used direct methods to stimulate production. Though there are parallels and interconnections between his treatment of the two types of hosiery, it will be simpler to deal with them separately, taking up silk stockings first.

*Silk stockings.*—During Colbert's first years in power, Hindret's establishment at the Château de Madrid was producing stockings. But it was not flourishing enough to satisfy Colbert, and he was quite ready to support another enterprise that promised to increase the production of silk hosiery. On July 27, 1663, royal letters patent were issued to James Fournier, who seems to have come from England, for the manufacture of silk stockings in the English style, at Lyon. The letters granted him a monopoly of such manufacture for that city and for fifteen leagues round about.

Now Fournier planned to make stockings on frames. Such an enterprise directly contravened the privilege granted to Hindret, and that entrepreneur did not hesitate to protest. Under these circumstances, Fournier turned to the *prévôt des marchands* and to the *échevins* of

<sup>152</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 265; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 278-80; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 179.



Lyon, and they wrote to Colbert on December 7, 1663. Fournier, they told Colbert, had put up a building and hired apprentices. His manufacture would be most "useful to the public." But he was prevented from working successfully by the opposition of Hindret. Would it not be possible to confirm Fournier's letters patent, they suggested, and thus put an end to Hindret's interference? Apparently Colbert intervened and forced Hindret to accept the situation. Fournier was also able to secure the support of the local authorities at Lyon. The *consulat* there entered into an agreement with him by which the authorities were to supply him each year with 30 apprentices, 10 female and 20 male. The *consulat* was to provide them with food, and Fournier was to train them in the art of stocking-making.<sup>153</sup>

Toward the end of 1664 Colbert wrote to Charrier, *prévôt des marchands* of Lyon, to inquire how Fournier's establishment was coming on. On December 9 Charrier replied thus:

To fulfill the orders that you gave me, I passed almost the whole morning in the house of sieur Fournier, and after having made a rather exact inspection of all the apparatus that composes the manufacture of silk stockings, I found 15 frames, in good shape and actually at work, among which there are still only 3 that were forged in this country; he has gotten the others from England with a great deal of trouble and expense, but the latter are not so good as the former by a great deal, either in beauty or in quality, so that on those that he has had made in this country he will make 4 stockings while 3 are being made on the others; and as the master forger whom he employs is perfecting himself every day in this and is acquiring new knowledge in it, he assures me himself that he will shorten the work still more and that the product will be still better.

Charrier went on to insist that the manufacture was a "fine one" and worthy of the honor of Colbert's "thoughts and protection." Fournier hoped, the *prévôt* reported, to have 25 frames in operation by October, 1665. Charrier told him that such an establishment was not large enough, and that he should take full advantage of his special privilege. Charrier even offered to secure for Fournier additional capital from the merchants of Lyon, but the replies of the entrepreneur convinced Charrier that Fournier did not want partners in his business, did not need additional credit, did not want his manufacture to grow too big, and would be entirely satisfied to limit it to 40 frames or thereabout. But

<sup>153</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 325-26, doc. 65; Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 281-82; Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 266; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 665-66.

Colbert had indicated to Charrier that a truly large establishment was needed. So Charrier pressed the matter, and at last Fournier replied that if he were given a loan without interest for 6 years of 40,000 *livres*, he would undertake to have 100 frames going at the end of that time.

Charrier concluded enthusiastically by remarking that Fournier was a solvent and a solid business man. In his books were orders for stockings from Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain. "Without exaggeration," declared the *prévôt*, "nothing will be as advantageous as this manufacture, if once it is well established." "If it can be maintained 15 or 20 years, all Europe will be supplied by it."<sup>154</sup>

A month later Charrier's enthusiasm was still running high, for on January 16, 1665, he wrote Colbert:

Our manufacture of silk stockings is growing every day, and I can assure you that the sieur Fournier makes them here of all the qualities and grades that are made in England and at a much better price, and even if there should remain enough desire for novelty among those most difficult to please to make them prefer the English stockings, we will find in the rest of this kingdom and in foreign lands sale for all that 1,000 frames could make in this city if we had them; and it will not be difficult to have them in a few years, because, without exaggeration, it seems that our inhabitants are born to make silk products.<sup>155</sup>

Charrier's ardent advocacy of the cause of silk stockings won from Colbert the loan of 40,000 *livres*, which had been suggested in the earlier letter. Fournier's establishment grew and prospered, and if it did not achieve the heights which the *prévôt* had predicted, still it spread somewhat, for the entrepreneur set up stocking frames at Saint-Étienne, as well as at Lyon. Fournier continued to have the whole-hearted support of the local officials. In August, 1667, for example, as a result of some labor troubles, the *prévôt des marchands* and the *échevins* of Lyon issued a series of strict regulations for the government, control, and discipline of Fournier's workers. Among the eleven articles of the regulations, one required the employees to confess eight times a year, and to go to mass every Sunday and holy day. In September, 1668, the archbishop of Lyon wrote Colbert that the number of silk-stocking frames

<sup>154</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 126, fols. 236-38; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 666-67; Bondoïs, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 282-83.

<sup>155</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 671; Bondoïs, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 283.

was increasing all the time. In March, 1669, the *échevins* reported to Colbert that the silk-stockings manufacture, under the care of sieur Fournier, was still growing, that more frames were being set up, and that exports were already large. Later in the year, however, Fournier died. This must have been a real setback to the industry, but even so Lyon remained an important center for the production of silk stockings on frames.<sup>156</sup>

Meanwhile, important developments had been taking place in regard to Hindret's establishment at the Château de Madrid. By 1666 it had become apparent to Colbert that Hindret and his family would not be able, without help, to sustain their manufacture. He therefore determined to form a company to support the manufacture of silk stockings at the Château de Madrid. This task he entrusted to Pierre Pecquot, a business man. On June 3, 1666, Pecquot wrote Colbert:

In accordance with the order of Monseigneur I have organized a company for the manufacture of Madrid, and I have joined it, with the sieur Indret and his children. This company is composed, if Monseigneur accepts it, thus: of sieur Indret, first entrepreneur, and of the sieurs Dalibert, Changuanguel, de Biz, Lesecq, and Rotrou, who propose to raise a capital of 300,000 *livres*, and more if it is necessary to conduct the manufacture and to establish in a year 200 frames in the places that Monseigneur shall order, and to break off commerce with England. They are agreed on all points, save as to an indemnity demanded by sieur Indret, a matter which I would have settled had Monseigneur given me the power to do so. They have met three times and have begged me to find out if it would be entirely agreeable to Monseigneur that they should all go to greet him and to receive their instructions from his lips. And for that purpose they are preparing to betake themselves to Fontainebleau Sunday, if Monseigneur does not forbid them to do so and me to conduct them thither. I will report more fully on this matter to Monseigneur by word of mouth, and will only say to him now that of all the manufactures of the time, this will be supported with the greatest firmness, brilliance, and success, if I am not mistaken and if Monseigneur protects it.<sup>157</sup>

Colbert approved the steps that had been taken, and in July, 1666, royal letters patent granted the company a privilege in the name of one of its members, François Estienne. The stipulation was included that Hindret was to be indemnified for the sums previously invested by him

<sup>156</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 281; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 179, 365-67, doc. 177; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 758-59, 682; Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 266.

<sup>157</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 788-89; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 291-92.

in the venture. The letters patent further provided that Estienne was to take over and operate the establishment, that he might set up similar manufactures in other places, and that he should receive from royal funds 600 *livres* a year for the support of 12 poor apprentices. The establishment could display the legend *Manufacture royale des bas de soye de France*. Nobles might join the company without impairment of their status. Foreign workers were to receive naturalization automatically. All employees were to be exempt from taxes, watch and ward, and the lodging of soldiers. The manufacture was to be free of all guild regulation, and it was endowed with a complete monopoly. It is not easy to reconcile the monopoly provision with the existence of the manufacture at Lyon and with the fact that frames for the manufacture of silk stockings were in operation at Caen at this time. From this time on Hindret, though he continued to be associated with the enterprise, ceased to be its head. At a later date he was active in the Languedoc woolen manufacture and he did not die till 1697.<sup>158</sup>

In the years immediately after 1666, the manufacture at the Château de Madrid continued its operations and found an outlet for its products by setting up a retail store in Paris. This step brought it into direct and earnest conflict with the guild of *bonnetiers* (hosiers) of Paris. The strife was brought to an end only by an agreement signed on May 10, 1670, by Philippe Pocquelin<sup>159</sup> and Pierre de Rotrou for the company and by six masters and wardens in behalf of the guild. In this compact the company agreed to close its retail store in Paris, to refrain from putting on its wares any indication of their price and origin other than a small wax seal bearing *fleurs-de-lys* and a small representation of the Château de Madrid, and to place no symbol indicating the Château on its wholesale stores in Paris. In return, the *bonnetiers* undertook to buy no silk stockings made on the frame except from the company directly, to sell no other stockings after their existing stocks were exhausted, and to buy from the company within 3 days 3,000 pairs of stockings.

On July 22, 1670, the company signed a similar agreement with the mercers of Paris, who also sold silk stockings. In this second treaty, a clause was included by which the company promised to sell its wares

<sup>158</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 291-93.

<sup>159</sup> An important business man and a relative of Molière. He should not be confused with Robert Pocquelin, who was interested in the East India Company, nor with Pierre Pocquelin, who was interested in the Company of the North and in the manufacture of cloth.

only to the *bonnetiers* and mercers of Paris. These agreements were given official sanction by decrees of the Council of State of July 1, August 11, and September 1, 1670, and January 13 and July 21, 1671. The first of these provided for the enforcement of the agreement with the *bonnetiers* by ordering each of them who sold silk stockings to bring his stock within a week to the royal tax bureau, to be inspected and marked. The company's agreements with the mercers and the *bonnetiers* did not mean that all its products had to be sold in the Paris market, since many members of both guilds acted as wholesale merchants and sold goods to other French cities and to foreign lands. There is evidence that these agreements greatly reduced the sale of foreign stockings in France. The English merchants, for example, complained that by them "the trade in English stockings" had been "entirely ruined."<sup>160</sup>

In 1671 a new and important step was taken in connection with the manufacture of the Château de Madrid, probably because Colbert had found that the production of silk stockings on frames was not increasing rapidly enough. In July of that year royal letters patent erected the silk-stocking workers of the Château into a guild and offered a gift of 200 *livres* to each of the first 200 workers who should qualify as masters. The purpose of the gift was to help the new masters to equip themselves with stocking frames. This action was confirmed and the guild set up formally by further letters patent of February, 1672. In the same month "statutes, ordinances, and regulations" for the guild were prepared and issued under royal authority.

These statutes show by their provisions that Colbert's interest lay in extending the use of the frame for the manufacture of silk stockings and similar articles (cuffs, undervests, drawers, socks, and gloves). Article VI provided that within three years the hundred most capable should be selected from the workers of the Château de Madrid. To them letters of mastership should be issued, and they should constitute the guild. After that, admission to the guild should be only by the regular method of apprenticeship and the completion of a masterpiece, as provided in articles XVII and XIX. For twelve years each master was to be allowed to have two apprentices. But after that, one was to be the limit. Any master of this guild was to be allowed to go to another city and to establish himself there without further formality. The statutes also contained the typical guild regulations on wardens, apprentices,

<sup>160</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fols. 250-57; Bondonio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 303-5; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 34, fol. 78.

journeymen, masters, methods of production, quality of goods, dyeing processes, and so forth. It was provided, for example, that each pair of men's stockings must weigh at least three and a half ounces. The first wardens of the guild were to be the four oldest masters. After that, wardens were to be elected.<sup>161</sup>

The *bonnetiers* of Paris were distressed at this creation of a rival guild and sought to establish their right to inspect the products of the Château de Madrid. But a decree of the Council of State of October 14, 1673, forbade such inspections. Still persisting, the *bonnetiers* in July, 1675, secured from the *Parlement* of Paris a decree which permitted them to inspect the shops of the silk-stockings workers, if accompanied by the wardens of the workers' own guild.<sup>162</sup>

The actual establishment of masters from among the workers at the Château de Madrid proceeded with some speed. The arrangement was fairly simple. The value of a stocking frame was fixed by royal authority at 400 *livres*. The king had promised each of the first 200 masters 200 *livres*. So each worker on becoming a master received a frame, turned over to the company of the Château de Madrid his claim on the king for 200 *livres*, and became indebted to the company for 200 *livres*. By February 3, 1673, the company had turned over to new masters 79 frames and held claims against the king for 15,800 *livres*. This sum Colbert ordered to be paid from the funds of the royal buildings. But because of the war-induced financial situation, the money was not forthcoming. By 1683 the company had provided new masters with 129 frames and held claims against the king for 25,800 *livres*.

Colbert's death probably convinced the company that payment would never be forthcoming, and it proceeded to attempt to regain possession of the frames. The workers then appealed to the king for protection. A decree of the Council of State of June 14, 1684, was the result. It ordered the members of the company to present to La Reynie, *lieutenant-général de la police* of Paris, within a week, a list of the sums owed them by the crown. This they did, and claimed that in addition to the 25,800 *livres* owed them on the looms, Colbert and the king had promised them an indemnity of 20,000 *livres*, at the time it was decided to

<sup>161</sup> Bondoïs, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 310 ff.; *Recueil des règlements*, IV, 1-7; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fols. 262-63; Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, p. 266. So far as I know, this is the only case on record where by royal authority the workers of a capitalistic factory were formed into a guild on the medieval model.

<sup>162</sup> Bondoïs, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 312-14.

form the workers into a guild. It seems that the company secured at least the sums due it on the looms.<sup>163</sup>

In 1683 there had been a development somewhat injurious to the guild of the workers of the Château de Madrid. On January 9 a decree of the Council of State authorized a nephew of Hindret, named Corrozet, to establish in Paris twenty frames for the manufacture of silk stockings. He was to be independent of the guild, but subject to inspection by its wardens. The reasons for this step, as set forth in the decree, were that Corrozet had assisted Hindret in the establishment of the original manufacture, and had devoted his life to this industry. But by oversight, the royal declaration of February, 1672, had failed to give him explicit permission to set up his own establishment. For fear that he would be troubled by the wardens of the guild, he had appealed to the king for the authorization which was granted by the decree.<sup>164</sup>

*Limitation of the use of frames.*—During the period of Colbert, the production of silk stockings on frames had increased greatly at other places than the Château de Madrid. By 1673 silk stockings were being made thus in eighteen French cities. At Nîmes, for example, the new industry had grown rapidly and achieved a notable success. Frames were even constructed there with great skill. But this new industry carried with it a serious threat for another branch of manufacturing. The capacity of the new frames tended to outstrip the demand for silk stockings. To keep the machines busy, their owners began to use them to turn out wool stockings, as well as silk ones. This tendency seemed likely to injure the wool-stocking industry, which Colbert was, with great pains, striving to build up. If allowed to continue, it would displace thousands of workers who were knitting wool stockings by hand. Even more practically, it aroused the ire of the *bonnetiers*, many of whom were conducting manufactures of hand-knit woollen stockings by some variety of the domestic system.

The *bonnetiers* appealed to Colbert to remedy the situation. Their pleas and Colbert's own views on the matter led to the issuance of a decree of the Council of State on October 26, 1680, by which the government stepped in, to prevent the technological unemployment which

<sup>163</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fols. 244-45; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 327-28; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 640.

<sup>164</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fols. 266-67; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 327.

seemed likely to arise from the introduction of the stocking frame. The decree stated that the silk-stockings workers were making products of linen and wool, as well as silk. Such practice tended to impair the quality of the silk stockings, according to information presented by the wardens of the guild of the *bonnetiers* of Paris. Worse, it tended to destroy all the manufactures of knitted woolen stockings, which gave a livelihood to "more than 30,000 persons who would be in beggary" if the silk-stockings workers were allowed to continue in this fashion. The decree, therefore, forbade all masters of the manufacture of silk stockings on frames to make any articles save ones composed entirely of silk, under penalty of confiscation of the goods and a fine of 500 *livres*.<sup>105</sup>

Colbert's attitude on the matter is expressed in a letter of January 16, 1681, to the archbishop of Lyon. He said that while the decree had arisen from the Paris situation, it was to be enforced in all provinces where the making of silk stockings on frames was established. Colbert put the matter very succinctly:

The masters and manufacturers of silk stockings on frames, of which the model was secured from England, have claimed the right to make woolen stockings on these same frames; and since this claim is contrary to the declaration by which they were established, and moreover His Majesty having considered the harm that this might do to his subjects since there are an infinite number of them who earn their living by knitting, the masters of the aforesaid craft have been forbidden to make any woolen stockings.<sup>106</sup>

That a serious attempt to enforce the decree in Paris, at least, was made under pressure from the *bonnetiers* is shown by an ordinance of January 26, 1681, issued by La Reynie, *lieutenant général de la police* of that city. The ordinance, after detailing the provisions of the decree, went on to say that it had been persistently violated by the makers of silk stockings, on the specious pretext that they had on hand large stocks of the prohibited goods. The ordinance directed that all such goods be declared and marked at the office of the *bonnetiers*, and sold off within a month.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 313, 320-21; "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, pp. 553-56; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,787, fol. 278.

<sup>106</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fols. 173-74; "Manuscripts français," No. 8752, fol. 364; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 321.

<sup>107</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, pp. 557-59.



How ardent were the efforts of the *bonnetiers* in enforcing the decree is indicated by an unsigned *mémoire* dated May 9, 1681, which, though it undoubtedly exaggerates the situation, still gives some idea of what went on:

The gentlemen and wardens of the guild of *bonnetiers*, doing their duty to execute the decree of the Council, here attached, have made various visits to the homes of the makers of silk stockings on frames, of whom they have found a great number in contravention, and these have been condemned to pay fines, which has obliged them to take refuge, some in the Temple, others at the Luxembourg and other places of asylum where the gentlemen and wardens have not the right to enter. So that at present there remain almost none of these workers in their ordinary dwellings, and the manufacture of silk stockings is being destroyed from day to day in Paris, which forces the *bonnetiers* to import them from England as formerly. To remedy which, it would be expedient to establish the guild of the makers of silk stockings in a city at some distance from Paris, such as it shall please Monseigneur [Colbert] to select, like Reims, or Orléans, in which an inspector on behalf of the king shall keep a register of the quantity and quality of products made each week on each frame, so as to render an account of them every month, which will prevent the export of frames to foreign lands and assure *le gage du roi*.<sup>108</sup>

In 1684, after Colbert's death, the policy developed under him was so modified as to permit silk-stockings makers to produce woollen stockings on one-half of their frames. But its essence—the limitation by the state of the use of machinery, for the benefit of handicraft workers—was retained for many years. Even in Colbert's lifetime, however, stocking frames were widely used to produce woollen hosiery, in direct competition with the hand-knitters. In Beauce alone, in 1680, there were said to be 400 frames used exclusively for the manufacture of wool stockings.<sup>109</sup>

*Summary.*—There can be no question that the production of silk stockings on frames grew rapidly in the period of Colbert, nor that his efforts helped to endow France with an important new industry. Ten years after Colbert died, silk stockings were being produced in increasing quantities at Paris and Lyon. Nîmes had 109 masters and 350 frames. Even at smaller places like Dourdan, silk stockings were being made on frames.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>108</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, p. 549; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 321-22.

<sup>109</sup> Ballot, *L'Introduction du machinisme*, pp. 266-67.

<sup>170</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures, 1693.

*Wool stockings.*—The story of wool stockings in the time of Colbert is somewhat different from that of the manufacture of silk hosiery. Though, in the face of the government's efforts, frames were being used to make woollen stockings, still machinery played no such dominant rôle as it did in the silk-stocking industry. In fact, Colbert's chief efforts were directed to building up the manufacture of woollen stockings not only to reduce the imports from England and the Channel Islands, but also to give work to idle hands. How inextricably were intertwined the two aspects of the problem in Colbert's mind is shown by a note written by him as early as 1663: "As there is nothing more important than forcing the beggars to work, establish there [the *Hôpital général*] manufactures of coarse worsted stockings, of which there come into the kingdom, from the islands of Jersey and Guernesey, 20,000 dozens."<sup>171</sup>

The development of the manufacture of woollen stockings in France is closely associated with the name of Jean Camuset. A merchant *bonnetier* of Paris and a business man of considerable ability, he played a part in several of the projects fostered by Colbert. But for nearly twenty years (1665–83) he devoted most of his attention to wool stockings. After Colbert's death he fell into poverty and as an old man of seventy-eight he sent a pathetic plea for aid to Chamillart, the *contrôleur général*.<sup>172</sup> But in 1665 Camuset was neither old nor poor. In that year he visited England, in an endeavor to recruit silk-stocking makers for the growing French industry. His effort met with little success, and he was soon back in France, working to establish the manufacture of hand-knit wool stockings at Auxerre and at Seignelay, an endeavor in which Colbert was peculiarly interested because of his estate at the latter place. On September 29 Camuset wrote Colbert that work had been

<sup>171</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, cclx.

<sup>172</sup> This *placet* is undated, but probably comes from the year 1698 or 1699. It is to be found in the Series F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1456A at the "Archives Nationales." It reads: "It is in extremities that I am obliged to present to you my *placet*, in addition to the preceding one that I had the honor to present to you, in which are set out at greater length my services of more than 20 years in executing the orders and commissions of the king for the establishments of a manufacture which I set up in a number of provinces, of which the progress is today considerable, for which His Majesty caused me to be paid 2,000 *livres* a year, which ceased to be paid to me 15 years ago. And as I am advanced in age, being 78 years old, infirm and without property, I turn to Your Greatness to beg you to obtain from the bounty of the king what you please, to aid me to subsist and to continue to pray God for the preservation of His Majesty and for you, Monseigneur, who am in profound respect.

begun at Seignelay on September 16, that an office had been established, and that sixty-nine girls, from the age of seven up, were engaged in knitting. At Auxerre, on orders from Colbert, the *échevins* had coöperated with Camuset in selecting a house to serve as the office and center of the new manufacture. In other places in Burgundy, Camuset had found that he could do little because it was the vintage season. In 1666 Camuset was paid 2,500 *livres* for the work he had done in connection with this new manufacture.<sup>173</sup>

In 1665 other efforts looking toward the establishment of the manufacture of woolen stockings were also being made under the guidance of Colbert. On April 28 the intendant d'Herbigny wrote Colbert from Bourges that he had failed to interest the merchants there in starting such a manufacture, but that the directors of the local *Hôpital-général* were willing to make the experiment. On June 1 he wrote again to say that these directors had showed him a sample pair of stockings made as a test, and that they were planning to borrow money to pay the initial expenses of the establishment. D'Herbigny was sure that a knitting industry would be very helpful to the town, since it would give the poor people something to do.<sup>174</sup>

In July, 1665, the town authorities of Poitiers were asked by Colbert to establish a manufacture of woolen articles. They decided that such a step would be "very advantageous" and appointed a committee to consider the proposal. From Reims, the intendant, Hoquebert, wrote in October, 1665, of a worker he had brought in to establish the "manufacture of English stockings." After failing to interest the business men of the town, Hoquebert arranged that this worker should associate his enterprise with the local charitable institutions, and should teach all comers, free of charge, the art of knitting woolen stockings.<sup>175</sup>

It was in 1665, too, that a far-reaching plan for combining poor relief with the manufacture of knitted goods was worked out. At this time great efforts were being made to extend the system of *hôpitaux généraux* and to put to work the poor who were shut up therein. Colbert insisted that nothing was more important than to force poor persons to engage in productive labor. Even before the *Hôpital général* in Paris

<sup>173</sup> Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 283-86; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 640.

<sup>174</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 765-67.

<sup>175</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 295, doc. 10; Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 287.

was organized, the poor living in the *Hôpital de la Pitié* had been kept busy at a special kind of knitting called "four-thread" or Saint-Marceau knitting. By an agreement between the authorities of this institution and the guild of *bonnetiers*, the guild undertook to supply the *Pitié* with wool and to buy all the goods made, at a fixed rate. After the *Pitié* was absorbed into the *Hôpital général*, the arrangement was continued and the contract renewed.<sup>176</sup>

In 1665 the directors of the *Hôpital général* of Paris began to investigate the possibility of establishing self-supporting manufactures in its component institutions. Influenced by the precedent of the *Pitié*, they turned their attention to the manufacture of woollen articles and came to the conclusion that there was "nothing more advantageous for the Public, the *Hôpital*, and the Poor," "nothing more necessary for use, more easy for manufacture, nor less changeable in style" than knitted goods. "Everyone needs stockings and hats," they decided, "and there is nothing more suitable than stockings and hats of wool." Other considerations that led the directors to favor knitted goods were set forth thus:

It does not require great industry nor great experience, and even less strength to knit; with any slight application to the task, folk of very moderate capacity—children, old people, the infirm, and the disabled—can easily be employed at it and succeed.

And since these garments of wool and worsted are rather for necessity than for ornament, and are worn next to the feet, legs, thighs, head, hands, and arms, the manner of making them does not change any more than the parts of the body.<sup>177</sup>

The directors of the *Hôpital général* found that there were two other kinds of knitting beside that styled "four-thread." They were coarse knitting, and fine or English knitting. The latter was done with two or three threads, and the directors discovered that it was practiced on the islands of Zerzay [Jersey] and Guarnezay [Guernsey] and other places of Great Britain, for which the English get from France more than 1,800,000 *livres* each year, not in exchange for other goods, but in money, and that no one in France worked at this English-style knitting, although all the market for it was in France.

In May, 1665, the directors signed for the *Hôpital général* a contract with the guild of the *bonnetiers* for articles produced by coarse knitting.

<sup>176</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 122 ff.; "Manuscrits français," No. 18,605, fols. 163 ff.

<sup>177</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 18,605, fols. 163 ff. This citation is a *mémoire* printed and published by the directors of the *Hôpital général* of Paris in 1666. The ensuing pages are based largely on it.

In its terms it was much like that between the *Pitié* and the *bonnetiers* for "four-thread" knitting. But from the first, the directors were much more interested in English knitting, "this manufacture which was not yet established in the kingdom." They secured from the Channel Islands women skilled in the fine knitting, to instruct the girls of the *Hôpital* in the art. The girls were "found proper for the work" and the directors felt that all the poor could learn to do fine knitting, or at least the coarse knitting.

So enthusiastic were the directors that they believed they had discovered a method for employing the poor of all the *hospitaux généraux* which had been established. Further, they felt that the success of their scheme would enable towns which had no *hospitaux* to establish them without fear of financial difficulty. Finally, they held that knitting would give employment to all "the idlers and poor" in France who were not shut up in *hospitaux*. But to achieve these happy results, some sort of organization was necessary. This the directors proceeded to create.

On December 26, 1665, there was signed a contract by which a company was formed. It was composed of the directors of the *Hôpital général* of Paris and of four merchant *bonnetiers*.<sup>178</sup> In the contract, provision was made for one possibility that had worried the members of the company. They feared that in their efforts to spread the knitting industry they might not only give employment to the poor and idle, but that agricultural and other laborers who already had jobs might turn to knitting as "more comfortable, and easier, and, perhaps, even more profitable" than their own work. If so, the company might cause "more harm than good." To obviate this danger, the contract contained a clause by which the king was to be petitioned to forbid any employed worker to leave his job to take up English-style knitting, and to prohibit any person to do such knitting unless he had written permission from the directors of the *Hôpital général*.

In 1666 the directors of the *Hôpital* published a pamphlet, in which they set forth the advantages of putting the poor to work at knitting, the facts as to the formation of the company, and their scheme for spreading the manufacture of knitted goods. Briefly, their plan consisted in three points. The directors of the *Hôpital* and the merchants

<sup>178</sup> Their names are given as Chasel, Gobert, Pihault, and Camusel. The last is almost certainly a misprint for Camuset.

associated with them offered to send wool for knitting to any *hôpitaux*, towns, cities, or individuals, and to pay all the expenses of shipping, and so forth. This wool was to be manufactured into stockings and other articles by persons who would otherwise be idle. The company would buy all the articles made, at a rate to be agreed on for each pair of stockings or for each pound of wool knitted into articles of clothing. It would also pay all the costs of shipping the finished articles back to Paris. By this glorified version of the domestic system, any town in France would be enabled, without the expenditure of a *sou*, to put all its poor and its idlers to work in a productive enterprise.

The pamphlet announced that the company had bought large quantities of wool and needles suitable for both coarse and fine knitting. It had secured the services of more knitting teachers from the Channel Islands and from Valognes. After the poor in the *Hôpital général* at Paris had been sufficiently trained, it was hoped that the most skillful among them might be sent out into the provinces as instructors. Already 1,200 of the 6,000 poor in the *Hôpital général* were being employed in knitting, "with a good deal of success." The others were being put to work at carding and spinning the wool, or at finishing the knitted articles. Of all the 6,000 the only ones left idle were those who were in the infirmary and those who were "entirely paralyzed." It was hoped that it would be even easier to get the provincial poor to work than those of Paris, since they were less undisciplined. It was thought possible, too, that the system might be extended to the prisons, where idleness was "accompanied by all vices and all sins." It might even be extended to the hospitals for the sick and incurable, at least for such inmates as suffered illnesses which permitted them "to move their hands and fingers."

Emphasis was to be placed in all localities on English-style knitting, since there were plenty of people in France who knew how to do the coarse knitting. The king favored the project and was prepared to protect it. There was no idea of forcing institutions in the provinces to join in the scheme. But if they wished to do so, nothing could be simpler. All the officials in charge of the poor of a town had to do was to count the poor, figure out how much wool they could knit, communicate with the directors of the *Hôpital général* of Paris, and give some assurance that the wool they received would be actually manufactured into knitted goods.

That there would be much hesitation in adopting the plan the company could scarcely believe, for by it the various localities in France could

easily put all their poor to work, cause them to earn something, instruct them, and make them capable both of discipline and of earning a livelihood; put them on the road to their salvation, and toward being useful to the Public, to themselves, and to their children, instead of being, as they are now, useless and burdensome persons, for the most part without religion and without the knowledge of God, of very disorderly life and ways, whose children would be still more pernicious because of the bad example of those who gave them birth, to whom one scarcely gives the name of father and mother.

The directors of the *Hôpital général* of Paris included in their pamphlet some sage advice on how to induce poor persons to work. The problem was serious, for as they put it:

The poor and especially the beggars and the idlers have such an aversion to work that they prefer misery and even prison and all the penalties of idleness rather than all the advantages that they might have in working at some manufacture.

None of them are ready to work willingly, not even in the hope of some reward, if they are not forced to it through the fear of some punishment, or of being deprived of their allotments of food, or of being penalized by a treatment more severe than the labor planned for them.

At first the poor were apt to grumble and revolt. But firm treatment would overcome all resistance and imprint both fear and regret in their minds. They should be gradually accustomed to work. Then to each should be assigned a daily task. If he did not do it all, or did not do it well, the food given him should be reduced. To any who did more than the work assigned, might be given a reward in bread, wine, meat, or even money. Under such a system most of the people could be taught to work successfully, for there were not among the poor as many "awkward or disabled" persons as there were "negligent and malicious" ones.

So extensive were the plans to supply France with English stockings through the forced labor of her depressed classes, and otherwise, that Colbert, early in 1666, could take a very drastic step. A decree of March 22, 1666, forbade the importation of all stockings and other manufactures of wool from England. To be sure, France was at war with England at the moment, and the decree might therefore be regarded as an

ordinary war measure. But the fact that it applied only to woollen goods, and that it mentioned stockings specifically, leaves little doubt that Colbert was using the war as an excuse to foster French industry.<sup>179</sup>

During the year 1666 the company, favored by Colbert's prohibition of English stockings, made efforts to expand along the lines planned. In June, 1666, it sent offers to the mayor of Poitiers. It proposed to advance money for the purpose of founding a manufacture there, and to secure royal decrees forbidding the seizure of sheep in connection with the collection of the *taille*. The municipal authorities thanked the company, discussed the matter, and appointed a committee, but nothing definite was done.<sup>180</sup>

The company probably met with similar responses elsewhere, and in fact much of the progress made in the stocking industry in 1666 seems to have been independent of the company. On April 30 Chamillart, intendant of Caen, wrote Colbert that the manufacture of stockings had been begun at Bayeux. He had arranged beforehand with local merchants to buy those that were made, so that people had been astonished at the readiness with which the stockings were sold. He thought that some might even be sent to Paris. On November 17 Chamillart wrote to say that he had established the manufacture of stockings at Avranches, and given the orders necessary to set up the manufacture of English stockings in other places. Twelve days later he wrote again. He reported that English stockings were being made at Caen, Bayeux, Saint-Lo, Coutances, Valognes, Beuzeville, Cherbourg, Granville, Cerisy, Torigny, Trévières, Louviers, Coigny, Soumervieu, and Neuilly.

Not only was this manufacture established in fifteen places, but, Chamillart declared, it was spreading. He had sent word to four Paris merchants, he said, to tell them that as good stockings were being made in Normandy as had ever been made in England. In this connection Chamillart made a suggestion to Colbert:

If you would tell them to come and see you, and then let them know that they could provide themselves in this province with as good merchandise as that which they get from England, and that this would be pleasing to the king, this would be the means of employing usefully all the people of this generality, which would produce advantages, as you know better than anyone else in the world.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>179</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 16,738, fol. 205.

<sup>180</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 295-96, doc. 11.

<sup>181</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 769, 771, 775; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 339, doc. 90.



These developments seem to have been quite independent of the stocking company and the directors of the *Hôpital général* at Paris. Colbert must have realized very quickly that the directors of the *Hôpital* were not going to be able to carry through the industrial plans which they had formulated, for in 1666 or early in 1667 he persuaded the wealthy financiers who were in control of the taxes of the "five big farms" to come to the support of the stocking company. Then on July 18, 1667, the whole enterprise was reorganized and merged with the London serge company. The new company which was to take over these two manufactures was composed chiefly of tax-farmers. Those interested in the "five big farms" undertook, as their contribution to its capital, to reimburse the directors of the *Hôpital général* for their expenditures on the manufacture of knitted goods, and to purchase all the stocks of goods on hand. At Colbert's request, Jean Camuset was made director of the manufacture of stockings and knitted goods under the new company.<sup>182</sup>

Earlier in 1667 Camuset had been working for the old company. In May, before starting into Berry to build up the manufacture there, he wrote to Colbert to say that he had made all arrangements for establishing the manufacture at Chevreuse. He had set up a central office and store and made provision for instructing poor folk in the art of knitting. He had asked the local priest to urge his parishioners to work hard and well. He had no doubt that while he was in Berry strengthening the establishments already started there, the manufacture at Chevreuse would take root and grow. Things were going so well, reported Camuset, that at Paris, Rouen, and Amiens merchants were selling only stockings made in France. He feared, however, that since the company was making no effort to keep the art of knitting secret, it would soon meet with competition from many private individuals. The fact that the company had 3,000 dozen stockings on hand seemed to worry its associates, though Camuset was sure that that quantity could be disposed of in a month. Camuset closed his letter by pointing out that he and his wife were working very hard at the project and were receiving only a small reward from the company. Colbert may have been touched by this remark, for when the new company was organized, he arranged that Camuset should receive a regular salary of 2,400 *livres* a year. In addi-

<sup>182</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 327-32. The company is discussed in greater detail in connection with the manufacture of serges. See pp. 171-77 above.

tion, Camuset was given 2,000 *livres* from royal funds, in 1668, for the work he had done.<sup>183</sup>

When Camuset was informed of the new organization, he approved heartily, and continued his efforts to encourage the manufacture in Berry, Beauce, Orléanaise, and Picardy. On August 6, 1667, he wrote to Colbert to report with considerable enthusiasm that Berry was turning out a good number of high-grade stockings and that the industry was growing in Beauce and Picardy. Private individuals were having made and selling as many stockings as the company. The company had had 6,000 dozen stockings made, according to Camuset, not to mention 2,000 or 3,000 dozens of coarse stockings knitted in the *hôpitaux*. The company was selling its wares fairly well, thanks to the efforts of Colbert with the merchants. There were not 4 merchants *bonnetiers* in Paris who had not purchased some of its wares. This was a good start, since the merchants were prone to oppose a new manufacture. The sales would have been even bigger, if certain mercers had not persisted in importing foreign stockings, which were no better and no cheaper than those of the company. Camuset felt that the increased rates of the tariff of 1667 would prove very beneficial and would serve to shut out entirely stockings from the Channel Islands.<sup>184</sup>

In September, 1667, Colbert turned his attention to Auxerre, where he was trying to create both the manufacture of lace and that of stockings. Under pressure from him, it was arranged with the *échevins* of that city that Camuset should make four trips to Auxerre each year and should stay there twelve days each time, for the purpose of establishing the manufacture of stockings and of teaching individuals how to knit. Camuset was in Auxerre at the time, but his efforts were interrupted by the vintage season, and it was not until September 29 that he was able to locate a house to serve as a center for the manufacture. This house the *échevins* rented for two years and turned over to Camuset. By October a difficulty had arisen. Those in charge of the lace manufacture claimed that Camuset was luring away from them girls for his own establishment. Camuset explained that the vintage season had interrupted all manufacturing. After it was over some of the girls had gone

<sup>183</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 217; Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 293-95; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 807; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 329-32.

<sup>184</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 295-96; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 809.

to work at stockings. "I cannot stop folk," he claimed, "who are accustomed to seek a novelty."

As if to mitigate his offense, Camuset reported optimistically on the progress of manufacture in towns near Auxerre. Forty persons were at work at Ormoy and as many at Cheny. The number at Seignelay had been increased by 12. Meanwhile, Camuset's agent at Auxerre, a man named Vernesson, had written to explain that if any girls had been taken away from the lace manufacture it was "by inadvertence." There were 200 girls knitting at Auxerre, he added, and 50 at Seignelay. On December 6 Camuset assured Colbert by letter that he would receive no more girls from the lace establishment. There were now 250 girls at work at Auxerre. The prince of Condé had recently visited the manufacture and found all the girls at work. The establishments in Berry were flourishing, especially that at Châteauroux.<sup>185</sup>

Indeed the manufacture of stockings, guided by the industrious Camuset, was spreading rapidly. A letter from the *échevins* of Bourges, in November, 1667, told how the enterprise was flourishing, and they repeated this assurance 10 months later, saying that 400 pairs of stockings were turned in at the office of the company each month. The directors of the *Hôpital général* at Moulins informed Colbert in December, 1667, that they had instituted a knitting manufacture in their *hôpital*, as he had wished. They already had 40 children at work, and the number was growing daily. In view of their heavy expenses, arising from the increase of poverty in their city, they asked to have their allowance of free salt doubled. Other establishments at Issoudun, Ainay-le-château, and Montluçon were started and gave every promise of prosperity. Over these developments Colbert watched with eager attention. He was ever ready to lend official help or encouragement. In July, 1668, for example, he wrote an official in the duchy of Châteauroux to aid the growth of the manufacture of woolen stockings there, since it was a "thing agreeable to the king."<sup>186</sup>

How the royal government under Colbert intervened to assist manufactures is well illustrated by a decree of the Council of State of September 27, 1668. The decree sought to facilitate the establishment of

<sup>185</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 441; Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 296-99; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 814; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 23, 361, 215.

<sup>186</sup> Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 299-300; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 818; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fol. 314; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 339, doc. 91.

the manufacture of knitted stockings and of lace at Sens. In regard to the stocking manufacture, it provided that from the royal funds each year prizes of 50 *livres*, 20 *livres*, 10 *livres*, and 5 *livres* should be paid to the best workers. Parents who had 3 children in the manufacture were to secure a certificate to that effect from the agent in charge of it. When this was validated by the municipal authorities, it would free the children's parents from all sums due for the lodging of soldiers. The necessary money to make up for these exemptions was to come from the municipal funds. Each year sieur Camuset was to visit Sens 3 times, and remain for 6 days each time. He was to instruct and perfect workers in the art of knitting. For this service he was to be paid 400 *livres* each year from the funds of the town. In Auxerre, too, prizes were sometimes given to the workers from the royal funds. In 1669, for example, 375 *livres* was donated for this purpose.<sup>187</sup>

By 1669 Colbert could boast to the king that the manufacture of woolen stockings in the English style had been established in thirty-two cities or towns of France.<sup>188</sup> But in that year he found it necessary to overhaul drastically the mechanism by which this industry was being supported. The company for two purposes—the manufacture of London serges and of knitted woolen stockings—had from the beginning been an anomaly. The chief interest of the associates had been in developing the serge industry, especially in Burgundy. The work connected with stockings had fallen chiefly on the shoulders of Camuset, the hired agent of the company. Early in 1669 Colbert decided to divide the company into its component parts. The tax-farmers would be left to concentrate their attention on serges. A new company would be formed to take over the stocking industry.

On February 1, 1669, Colbert and four merchant *bonnetiers* of Paris signed an agreement by which the new company was formed. One of the four was Camuset, the others were Romain Poulain, Toussaint Zelin, and Marcel Auvray. Colbert had explained to the merchants that the king was trying to establish manufactures so as to make the country wealthy and to give employment to the poor. He was especially interested in the manufacture of stockings in the English style. Colbert therefore felt that the manufacture must be supported and continued. For this purpose, a company seemed most suitable. The agreement contained

<sup>187</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, pp. 419-421; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 286.

<sup>188</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 242.

a number of stipulations, binding on Colbert on the one hand and on the four associates on the other.

The associates undertook to maintain the establishments already created in a number of cities and towns in Berry, Burgundy, Beauce, and Picardy, and to enlarge them so that the number of workers would be increased by one-fourth each year for 4 years. They were to present to Colbert certification from the local officials, demonstrating that such an enlargement had been effected. The associates further undertook to create at least 6 new establishments each year for 4 years. Each of these establishments was to have at least 100 workers at the end of the first year of its existence, and 200 at the end of the second. All the establishments were to be inspected by agents of Colbert.

Colbert, in turn, agreed that the new company should receive as a gift from the royal funds, 24,000 *livres* each year for 4 years. Further, a loan of 240,000 *livres* for 6 years, without interest, was to be made to the company from royal funds. But the effects of the old company—goods, tools, accounts receivable, and so forth—which Colbert was turning over to the new company, to the value of 160,000 *livres*, were to be counted as part of this sum. The remaining 80,000 *livres* of the loan was to be advanced thus: 20,000 *livres* immediately, 20,000 *livres* in 6 months, 10,000 *livres* in each quarter of the year 1670. The loan was to be repaid thus: 26,666 $\frac{2}{3}$  *livres* was to be paid to the associates of the old company each year for the 6 years following January 1, 1675; the 80,000 *livres* due the king was to be paid off during the same period. The whole agreement was drawn up and signed in the presence and with the assent of the members of the old company.<sup>189</sup>

By July 19, 1671, the 80,000 *livres* of the loan without interest from the king to the new company had been paid over to it. By the same date, the company had received 50,000 *livres* of its direct subsidy and 6,000 *livres* had been paid direct to Camuset for his services in connection with the enterprise during the years 1668 to 1670. To this financial aid from the king was added official support for the company from other directions. On June 16, 1669, for example, the king, or more probably Colbert in the king's name, wrote a letter to the municipal officials of Villeneuve-le-Roi, Joigny, La Charité, La Châtre, Vierzon, Saint-Amaind, and Joinville, in which places the company was planning to set up new establishments. The letter directed the local authorities

<sup>189</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 358-62.

to assist Camuset in his work in every way possible. They were to supply him with a house, and to force all unemployed persons over 10 years of age to work in the new knitting industry. At the same period, the intendant Tubeuf, in Berry, was striving to build up the enterprise in Bourges and other towns. The intendant Chamillart, too, was encouraging the knitting industry in the Norman towns, where, independently of the company, it had sprung up.<sup>190</sup>

The years 1668 to 1670 also saw a number of royal decrees and ordinances aimed to reduce the importation, especially the smuggling, of foreign stockings, and to eliminate a variety of frauds from the industry. A decree of January 13, 1670, for instance, provided for the affixing of a special mark to foreign woolen stockings coming into the area of the "five big farms" and, within two weeks, to all stockings of foreign origin already within that area. But, despite such regulations, smuggling undoubtedly continued.<sup>191</sup>

In this period Camuset was busy as ever. In the spring of 1670 he went to establish the knitting industry at Montargis, and Colbert wrote the intendant of Orléans directing him to assist Camuset in his efforts. The intendant was to arrange with the town authorities for the raising of a small fund with which to rent a house for the manufacture and to provide rewards for the most assiduous workers. The intendant was likewise to strengthen the establishment at Dourdan. At the request of the inhabitants, the company, later in 1670, undertook to set up establishments in Blesle and Clermont-Ferrand. As usual, Colbert wrote to the intendant in that district urging him to support the endeavor. On September 12, 1670, he wrote the intendant of Tours to congratulate him on his efforts in behalf of manufactures and to tell him that

<sup>190</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 371, 557. Through some sort of typographical error, Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 302, n. 111, makes the payments of July 19, 1671, appear as 100,000 *livres* instead of 20,000 *livres*. Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 824; Bondonis, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-3. It might be noted here that Bondonis overemphasizes the degree to which the stocking frame was used in the manufacture of woolen stockings. There can be no doubt that the large majority of the establishments set up by Camuset and the company were entirely devoted to hand-knitting. Colbert regarded the industry as a handicraft and sought to preserve it as such. The stocking frame represented an invasion of the silk-stocking industry into the wool-stocking field, rather than the basis of the wool-stocking industry. See, for example, the citations in footnotes 165, 166 above, and 195 below. Or, again, consider the efforts of the *hôpitaux généraux*, the importation of knitting teachers, and so forth.

<sup>191</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 301, 308-10; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fol. 137.

he should keep his eyes open for towns where the manufacture of woollen stockings or other industries might be established.<sup>192</sup>

*The Dutch war and after.*—During 1671 Camuset continued his activities, for which he received in the following year 4,000 *livres* from the royal funds. The Dutch war, which broke out in 1672, interrupted the development of the woollen-stocking industry, as it did so many of Colbert's other projects; but in 1673 Colbert could, none the less, boast that this industry was established in every province of France. How the war affected such activities by drying up the sources of financial support, is indicated by what happened to Camuset. The *Comptes des bâtiments* show that from 1666 to 1672, as salary and as rewards for his activities in connection with knitted stockings, he received from royal funds 14,500 *livres*. From September 1, 1672, to April 26, 1679, that is a period that roughly coincided with the duration of the war, he seems to have received nothing. From the spring of 1679 to that of 1681, he got 16,000 *livres*, though part of this sum was undoubtedly in recognition of his services during the years of the war. On the other hand, Camuset, in the war period, continued to receive salaries from municipalities, such as Auxerre.<sup>193</sup>

A report by Camuset on the imports of stockings through the customs offices of the *Convoi de Bordeaux* and of the "five big farms" shows that the amount brought in tended to rise during the latter years of the Dutch war. The imports, as given by him in dozens of stockings, are:

Year	Five Big Farms	Convoi de Bordeaux
1675	7,351	1,896
1676	7,035 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	6,110 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1677	11,440	7,599
1678	10,541	7,496
1679	13,703	20,137
1680	10,577	20,140

Camuset, however, added in explanation that before the foundation of the manufacture in France, up to 40,000 dozens of woollen stockings had been imported annually, that more knitted woollen stockings were being worn in France since stockings of cloth or serge were no longer

<sup>192</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 527, 545, 550-51; Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 306-7.

<sup>193</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 640 and 106, 217, 371, 557, 1210, 1229, 1337, 1338; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 689.

used, that most of the stockings coming in via Bordeaux were destined for reëxport to Spain, Portugal, and the Indies, and that some of the stockings imported into the "five big farms" were reëxported to foreign lands via Lyon.<sup>194</sup>

The same report gave a detailed account of the state of the stocking industry in 1681. It shows a number of things: first, that the periods of the active creation of new establishments were two—before the war, 1665 to 1672, and after the war was nearly over, 1678 to 1681; second, that during the war period many of the establishments were turned over by the company to the public for support; third, that the company must have been dissolved during the war, leaving its work to be carried on by Camuset alone; fourth, that the knitted-stockings industry was in good part an artificial creation; fifth, that it was both extensive and important in 1681; sixth, that Camuset was willing to take credit for establishments, for the foundation of which he had been only partly responsible.

The report may be summarized thus:<sup>195</sup>

"List of establishments of knitted woolen stockings which are at present [November, 1681] supported by sieur Camuset:"

1. Issoudun: begun in 1668, at least 300 workers, not counting those of the suburbs, makes fine stockings.
2. Châteauneuf: begun in 1680, at least 300 workers, not counting those of Saint-Amant and Dun-le-Roy, makes stockings of Berry wool "which wear well."
3. Sens: begun in 1668, 350 workers, who make both coarse and fine stockings.
4. Montargis: begun in 1668, 200 workers, who make fine stockings.
5. Saint-Aignan: begun in 1678, 130 workers, making fine stockings.

<sup>194</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 551, report to Colbert by Camuset, November, 1681.

<sup>195</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 551, report to Colbert by Camuset, November, 1681. It is to be noticed that in this report Camuset makes no mention of stocking frames, as he would scarcely have failed to do had they existed in these places. See also Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 339-40, doc. 94; and Bondonis, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 319. The difficulty of working from this material may perhaps be indicated by the fact that Boissonnade, Bondonis, and I have secured from the same manuscript somewhat varying figures. For instance, for Chevreuse, Boissonnade has 600 workers, Bondonis, 160, and I, 60. But Bondonis gives as the total for the workers in the establishments supported by Camuset 1,340, as I do, whereas his figures add up to 1,440. For the total number of workers on the second list, Bondonis gives 34,100, but his figures add up to 33,800 and he seems to have omitted the town of La Fère from his list. Boissonnade, on the other hand, gives the total of 34,100 as if for both lists, although his figures add up to 35,580. My own total for the second list is 33,700. If the 400 workers usually but not actually employed in the *Hôpital général* be added, it brings the total up to that indicated in the manuscript, 34,100. All this merely goes to show that in transferring data from a manuscript to notes, to the author's manuscript, to the printed page, slight errors are almost bound to creep into even the most authentic and scholarly works.



6. Chevreuse: begun in 1669, 60 workers, making fine stockings.

[Total number of workers "supported" by Camuset, 1,340]

"List of establishments made by sieur Camuset for the manufacture of knitted woolen stockings, of which the support is left to the public:"

1. The *Hôpital général* of Paris: established by Camuset in 1665 and kept up by him until 1679, when it was taken over by the merchants of Paris. Usually there are 700 or 800 workers there, but "at present there are only 400, because of the number of poor who have gone out in the last two years.

2. Beauce: stockings were already being made in this district when Camuset went there in 1667, to perfect the manufacture. The stockings formerly made there were of "mediocre quality and grade, being worth only 10 to 20 *sous*, and those that are made there now are worth from 3 to 5 *livres*. There are about 20,000 workers and 60 to 80 parishes."

3. Picardy: Camuset went there in 1667 to perfect the manufacture, as in the case of Beauce. There are 54 parishes from Amiens to Beauvais, and 10,000 workers.

4. Bourges: Camuset established the manufacture there in 1667. He turned it over to the public in 1678. There are 500 workers.

5. Châteauroux and Dun-le-Roy: Camuset began this establishment in 1669 and turned it over to the public in 1675. There are about 300 workers.

6. La Châtre and Saint-Amand: Camuset began the establishment there in 1669 and turned it over to the public in 1675. There are about 250 workers.

7. Moulins: Camuset began the establishment there in 1671 and turned it over to the public in 1676. There are 200 workers.

8. La Charité: Camuset began the establishment there in 1670 and turned it over to the public in 1675. There are 120 workers.

9. Gien: Camuset began the establishment there in 1670 and turned it over to the public in 1674. There are 260 workers.

10. Seignelay: Camuset began the establishment there in 1668 and turned it over to the public in 1680. There are 200 workers.

11. Joigny: Camuset began the establishment there in 1671, and turned it over to the public in 1678. There are 100 workers.

12. Auxerre: Camuset began the establishment there in 1668 and turned it over to the public in 1680. There are 300 workers.

13. Reims: Camuset began the establishment in 1672 and turned it over to the public in 1678. There are 300 workers.

14. La Fère: Camuset began this establishment in 1672 and turned it over to the public in 1676. There are 100 workers.

15. Provins: Camuset began this establishment in 1672 and turned it over to the public in 1676. There are 250 workers.

16. Étampes: Camuset began this establishment in 1671 and turned it over to the public in 1675. There are 120 workers.

17. Clermont and Blesle: Camuset began this establishment in 1670 and turned it over to the public in 1675. There are 300 workers.

[Total number of workers in this list: 33,700, of whom 3,600 were in establishments founded by Camuset.]

It seems that by "supporting" a manufacture Camuset meant supplying the workers with wool and providing for the sale of the stockings they made. By turning an establishment over to the public, he undoubtedly meant leaving the workers free to buy wool and sell their wares for themselves and to make bargains on these matters with individual merchants. It will be noted that most of the establishments were "turned over to the public" in the war years. Perhaps the company, no longer receiving its subsidy, was unable to carry on, and Camuset had gone about making the various manufactures self-sustaining as rapidly as possible. It may be significant that the first instalments on the payment of the company's loan of 240,000 *livres* fell due in 1675. Only 2 establishments were "turned over to the public" before that year, and 13 were turned over after the beginning of that year. It is not clear just how Camuset came to "support" the remaining establishments after the dissolution of the company, whether he was acting on his own account or as an agent of Colbert in founding new ones after 1678, and whether the company ever paid its debts.

That some of the establishments languished, once they were "turned over to the public," seems certain. Camuset, for instance, turned over the manufacture at Joigny to the public in 1678. It is recorded that it ceased to function in 1679. On the other hand, the renewed activity in the foundation of establishments which began toward the close of the Dutch war probably more than counterbalanced such losses. On August 1, 1679, for example, Colbert wrote to the intendant Mignon that he was sending Camuset to Châteauneuf to establish the manufacture of wool stockings there, as he had done in many other cities and places. Camuset recorded the manufacture of Châteauneuf as established in 1680.<sup>198</sup>

Further to encourage the manufacture of woolen stockings in France, Colbert secured in 1679 the issuance of a decree raising the duties on such stockings coming into France from the Spanish territory to the north of France. On April 27, 1679, he wrote to Michel Le Peletier

<sup>198</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 425, letter from Menars to Colbert, June 27, 1682; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, p. 105; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 551. Camuset's report of 1681.

de Souzy, the intendant at Lille, a letter which explains his point of view in some detail:

I rendered account to the king of the contents of your letter of the twentieth of this month concerning the execution of the decree of the Council on the subject of the woolen stockings which are made in the lands owing allegiance to the Catholic [i.e., Spanish] king, and His Majesty ordered me to tell you that he was resolved on the establishment of these duties not only to produce some revenue in his [tax] farms, but also, much more, to get the inhabitants of the villages under the rule of the Catholic king to come into those of France, or to get the merchants to extend this manufacture ~~in~~ the villages under the rule of the king, so you should not pay so much attention to the customs duties of His Majesty as to this larger view which he has; and I may say to you that those great arguments which the merchants make to you about the complete ruin of their commerce and their manufactures are the usual grounds of which they make use, on all occasions, to maintain their customary ways of doing things, even when these are bad, and are really more harmful than advantageous to them; and provided that you work continually to attract these manufactures into the lands ruled by king, His Majesty will be satisfied with all the expedients of which you make use to attain that end. You should not pay much attention to the fact that the tax farmers may agree to these things, because they think only of the duties they can get out of them, and do not consider the benefit of the public good, which consists in giving an opportunity to the subjects of the king to earn a living with ease, and to make it hard for foreigners to do so.<sup>197</sup>

On January 14, 1680, Colbert took another step to improve the manufacture of knitted woolen stockings. He secured for Camuset a royal commission which authorized him to inspect the existing establishments and to prevent abuses, "which might well reduce the quality and thus the market" for these stockings "in the kingdom and abroad." Camuset was to see that the stockings were of the right size and the right weight. Municipal officials were to assist him in every way. He was also to found new establishments, securing houses therefor and assembling the idle, including children over ten years of age, to work there. In these rented houses were to be workshops, lodgings for those in charge of the manufacture and for the instructors, and shops for the sale of goods.<sup>198</sup>

The kind of work that Camuset was expected to do is indicated by instructions for him drawn up by Colbert on June 1, 1682. Camuset

<sup>197</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, pp. 435-36.

<sup>198</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, fols. 40-42; Bondois, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," pp. 318-19.

was directed to stop the use of poor wool, and to examine the preparation and the dyeing of the worsted, the abuses in the industry, the methods of knitting, and the weight and size of each sort of stocking. He was to confer with the wardens of the *bonnetiers* on the quality of stockings and on methods by which they might be improved. He was to make a list of the manufactures, showing the number of workers engaged. He was to find out if silk-stockings makers were manufacturing wool stockings on their frames. If so, he was to show them the decree of October 17, 1681, and put an end to this practice. He was to search for methods of increasing the number of establishments and of workers, and of facilitating the sale of stockings. On all these matters he was to send in weekly reports.<sup>199</sup>

But Colbert's rôle in the stocking industry was not limited to directing and encouraging Camuset. He was ever alert for any opportunity to strengthen these manufactures. In October, 1680, for example, Le Blanc, the intendant of Rouen, suggested that the abbeys in Normandy, which distributed alms to the poor, should be persuaded instead to give wool to the poor and pay them for spinning it into worsted. Colbert approved the idea enthusiastically. It would be a great advantage to the state, he thought, in that it would banish idleness and reduce the numbers of vagabonds and rascals who collected around the great abbeys like those of Jumièges and Bec. Colbert reiterated his approbation in further letters in November, 1680. In January, 1681, he congratulated Le Blanc for having persuaded the abbey of Fécamp to give work to the recipients of its alms. He suggested a simple system. Let the monks give alms to the poor, one-half in bread and one-half in wool. Let them require that the wool be brought back, made up into stockings. By increasing the amount of wool gradually it would be possible to give productive work to all save the sick and disabled.<sup>200</sup>

Or again, in March, 1682, Colbert wrote to de Nointel, the intendant of Tours, in an effort to increase the manufacture of stockings. The mayor of Angers had written to Colbert to say that that town was anxious to establish the stocking industry. It was customary, in such cases, declared Colbert, for the town to contribute toward the preliminary expenses. It should rent a house for the managers and instructors,

<sup>199</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 303; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 854.

<sup>200</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 713-14; Bondoio, "Colbert et la fabrication du bas, 1665-1683," p. 323.

purchase a small quantity of wool for the workers to begin on, and appropriate 300 or 400 *livres* to pay the salary of those who were to supervise the establishment. The intendant was to inquire as to whether Angers would be able to bear these expenditures. The letter shows that the founding of a new establishment had been reduced almost to a routine formula. But apparently Angers objected, even to the small outlay suggested by Colbert, for on December 16, 1682, the minister again wrote to the intendant to say that he could see no reason why the trifling expenditures necessary should stand in the way of the establishment. To hire the teachers, to gather boys and girls from twelve years of age to twenty as workers, to buy some wool, cost so little that an "infinity" of establishments had already been made.<sup>201</sup>

What Colbert preached, he strove to practice. In 1683 he tried to get the peasants who lived on some of his estates to send their children to work for the stocking manufacture at Châteauneuf. His interest in stockings became so well known that intendants would write in, naming towns suitable for the creation of new establishments for stocking-making.<sup>202</sup>

In the last year of his life Colbert was confident that the stocking industry had produced great benefits for France and might well be increased still further. On February 5, 1683, he wrote to five intendants to tell them that Camuset had reported on the state of the manufacture in their generalities. It was growing rapidly, he said, doing much good to the country, and enabling a great multitude of people to earn their living. The intendants were to study the industry and report on it, and they were to encourage the local officials to support and increase it.<sup>203</sup>

*Summary.*—Indeed there can be no doubt but that Colbert's efforts in behalf of the manufacture of woolen stockings were in a large degree successful. The ambitious plan of making all the *hôpitaux généraux* of France into centers of the industry fell through.<sup>204</sup> The company to foster the manufacture was made over and then disappeared. But the local establishments, so persistently nursed along by Camuset and Colbert,

<sup>201</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 731, 742; "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 391-92.

<sup>202</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 207; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 425, letters from de Menars to Colbert, June 30, July 5, 1682.

<sup>203</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 46-47.

<sup>204</sup> That something came of it is perhaps indicated by the fact that in 1693 woolen stockings were being made in at least seven of the provincial *hôpitaux généraux*, viz., Dijon, Langres, Vitry-le-François, Noyon, Laon, Soissons, and Reims. See G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures of 1693.

endured long after both men were dead. France had been making knitted woolen stockings before the time of Colbert. But through his labors, it came to make a much better quality of stockings and infinitely more of them.

# XI

## MORE MANUFACTURES: LACE, TAPESTRIES, MIRRORS, AND OTHER WARES

### I. THE LACE COMPANY

IN BUILDING UP the manufacture of woollen stockings, Colbert resorted to a variety of devices, but one he avoided. He did not give a monopoly to the wool-stocking company which he created. By contrast, in the lace industry one of the chief features of Colbert's program was a semimonopolistic company. Aside from this one point—and it was an important one—Colbert's efforts in the two fields were similar. This was necessarily so, for the problems presented were, in the nature of things, very much the same. Both lace and wool stockings were made by hand. The manufacture of what Colbert regarded as inferior grades of both was already established in France before he came to office. In both industries Colbert's chief objectives were to introduce the manufacture of high-grade products, and so to expand these manufactures as to supply the whole French market.

In 1661 the making of lace by traditional methods and in traditional patterns was carried on in a number of localities in France. In the areas around Auxerre, Alençon, and Aurillac, for example, it was a fairly widespread household industry. But for the ladies and gentlemen of high society the most stylish lace was Venetian point, and lace from Venice was imported into France in large quantities. A good deal of lace was also brought in from the Low Countries, but it was not esteemed quite so highly as that from Venice.

Any manufactured product which was imported into France in large quantities was bound to attract Colbert's attention. This was especially true in the case of lace, since France produced linen thread from which it was made, since lace-making was a household industry which could be easily introduced into areas which had no manufacturing establishments, and since women and girls who might otherwise be idle could be profitably employed in making this luxury article.

By 1664 Colbert was laying plans for the reformation and enlargement of the manufacture of lace in France and was in correspondence with de Bonzi, the French ambassador at Venice, on the subject. The possibility of getting Venetian girls to come to France to teach their style of lace-making was discussed in letters between the two, and de Bonzi also reported that from 900,000 *livres* to 1,200,000 *livres* was spent by the French each year in Venice for the purchase of lace. But it was not until the next year that definite steps were taken.<sup>1</sup>

*Establishing the company.*—In May, 1665, a royal declaration was issued, establishing a privileged company for the manufacture of lace. The declaration set forth that the king was anxious to encourage manufactures so as to prevent the export of money and to give employment to the people. Colbert had reported that the establishment of lace-making would serve both these ends. Three entrepreneurs, Jean Plumiers, Paul de Marcq, and Catherine de Marcq, had proposed to introduce the manufacture of lace in the style of Venice, Genoa, and other foreign countries. The lace made under the new auspices was to be known as French point (*point de France*). The entrepreneurs had given assurances that they would be able to supply the royal household, the court, and indeed all of France with French point at very moderate prices.

In view of these facts, the declaration went on to grant to the entrepreneurs, for the period of 9 years, and for the whole kingdom a monopoly of the right to make lace in the style of Venice, Genoa, or other foreign lands. All persons not working for the entrepreneurs were forbidden to make or imitate such lace, but on the other hand there was to be no interference with people who were already making lace, or embroidery in other styles. In addition, foreign workers brought in by the company were to be considered naturalized citizens. Painters working for the king were to provide designs for the lace. All lace for the royal household was to be bought from the entrepreneurs, but they were to supply it at cost plus 5 percent. The entrepreneurs were to be allowed to open 4 stores in Paris, one of which was to be in the galleries of the Louvre. Each store was to be allowed to display the royal arms and the legend *Manufacture royale des points, passemens et ouvrages de fil de France*. The buildings used by the entrepreneurs were to be free from

<sup>1</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et l'industrie de dentelle, la manufacture d'Auxerre," p. 206. This article will be cited hereafter as "Bondonis, *Auxerre*." Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 693-94.



the lodging of soldiers, and those who dwelt in them from watch and ward and all city taxes. Workers engaged by the entrepreneurs were to be forced to serve out their time. All goods made were to be exempt from taxes, even from export duties. Finally, the king promised the entrepreneurs subsidies totaling 36,000 *livres*, half down, and half when 1,600 workers were actually engaged in making lace for them. The first payment of 18,000 *livres* was made promptly on May 25, 1665, and eventually the entrepreneurs received some 20,000 *livres* more than they had been promised.

In return for all these privileges and benefits, the de Marcqs and Plumiers were to be held to certain obligations. They were to establish the manufacture of lace in France "with as much abundance and perfection" as in the cities of Venice and Genoa. They were to bring in 30 skilled mistresses of the art of lace-making from Venice, and 200 women or girl lace-makers from Flanders. Within 2 years they were to have 1,600 trained girls and women making lace in 8 cities in France. Though provision was made that with Colbert's permission the numbers in the different cities might be varied, it was laid down that the teachers and workers were to be distributed thus:

<i>City</i>	<i>Venetian Mistresses</i>	<i>Flemish Workers</i>	<i>Local Workers</i>
Arras	3	30	300
Reims	6	40	200
Quesnoy	2	50	50
Sedan	2	20	200
Château-Thierry	4	12	200
Loudun	3	20	200
Alençon	2		200
Aurillac	3		200

Colbert was to appoint a *contrôleur* for each city, to see that the entrepreneurs lived up to their engagements.<sup>2</sup>

Two supplementary decrees of October 21, 1665, modified somewhat the declaration of the previous May. The first announced that the 1,600 workers would not be sufficient to supply all France with lace of the

<sup>2</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 107-10; Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 263-67; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 337-38, doc. 86; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVII, 60 (the date of the declaration is here given incorrectly as August, 1665; this error is probably due to the fact that the declaration was registered by the *parlement* of Paris on August 14, 1665. See "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 112-13); Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 61, 97, 171; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 192.

new style. Lest this situation serve as an excuse for outside merchants to start similar manufactures and compete for workers, the decree authorized the entrepreneurs to establish as many other centers of manufacture as they saw fit, each with as many workers as was necessary. It also forbade the lace workers to make lace except in the houses of manufacture established by the company, under penalty of fine and forfeiture of the goods illegally made. The second decree reiterated this last provision and forbade the workers to make any lace save under the conditions and after the patterns prescribed by the company.<sup>3</sup>

The three entrepreneurs named in the declaration of May, 1665, were not the only ones interested in the venture. Jean Pluimers, a native of Tournai but long domiciled in Paris, and Paul and Catherine de Marcq, his nephew and niece, were the leading spirits. But associated with them were officials, administrators, merchants, and financiers—Jean Talon, Talon de Beaufort, Le Bie, François Amonnet, Bastonneau, Bulte, Etienne Landais, Lopin, Le Faivre, Delaunay, and Morand. These fourteen individuals were organized into a company which was usually referred to as *La Compagnie des intéressés du point de France*. In course of time new members were added to the company, especially in 1666. Two years later the conduct of the business was entrusted to eight directors with large salaries. The offices and one of the stores of the company at Paris were located in the Hôtel de Beaufort. Until 1674 at least, when its monopoly lapsed, the company paid extremely handsome dividends. But little is known about the details of its organization, its financial set-up, or its progress.<sup>4</sup>

Much clearer is the rôle played by Colbert in supporting the company. He was ever ready to help it to solve technical problems, as for instance in 1666, when he took up the matter of importing for it Dutch workers to make the linen thread it needed. He was even readier to secure for it the aid of the government. Indeed a whole series of enactments testifies to the special privileges showered on the lace company by the state. A decree of February 19, 1666, forbade the sale of foreign lace in France, under penalty of a fine of 3,000 *livres* and confiscation of the goods. Another decree and a declaration, both of October 12, 1666, reiterated this prohibition, and forbade also the wearing of for-

<sup>3</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 116-17; Bondonis, *Auxerre*, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> Bondonis, "Colbert et l'industrie de la dentelle, le point de France à Reims et à Sedan," pp. 370-71, 389. Hereafter this article will be cited as "Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*." Bondonis, *Auxerre*, p. 209; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 439, note 2. The account given by Clément here is largely incorrect, especially as regards the rôle of Mme Gilbert.

eign lace after January 20, 1667, under penalty of a fine of 1,500 *livres*. Further decrees of August 16 and December 30, 1666, reënforced the earlier ones.<sup>5</sup>

More important was a decree of the Council of State dated February 15, 1667. It stated that foreign lace was still being sold and worn, and that girls taught by the entrepreneurs were making lace on their own account. The decree therefore made "very express and repeated prohibitions" against the manufacture, sale, and use of any lace, old or new, save that made under the auspices of the lace company. The penalty was to be a fine of 3,000 *livres* for first offenders. Second offenders were to be dealt with summarily, "as disturbers of the public peace." Workers were specifically forbidden to make any lace save to the order of the company. Thus this decree ignored the rights of the old, local lace-making centers, and gave the company a monopoly of the manufacture of lace in France.<sup>6</sup>

Other decrees of January 31, 1668, March 17, 1668, and August 19, 1669, reiterated the previous orders and forbade the sale or use of any lace not marked with the *cachet* of the *manufacture royale*. They repeated the prohibition against making lace except for the company, and even forbade the manufacture of any articles, which, though not lace, resembled the products of the company. Further to enforce the monopoly of the lace company, La Reynie, *lieutenant-général de la police* of Paris, issued an ordinance on March 6, 1669. It rehearsed the prohibitions against wearing any lace save that of the *manufacture royale*. It announced that "confiscations and rigorous condemnations" had been pronounced against a number of merchants for selling illegal lace. It declared that the use of such lace could be prevented only "by using the same rigor against all individuals, both men and women, who in the future wear these forbidden products." It went on to forbid the sale, purchase, or use of illegal lace. It forbade garment-makers to use such lace, or to repair or clean it. Heavy fines were to be the penalties for infractions of the ordinance, and it was to be enforced by the officers of the Chatelet.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 125-27; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 135, fol. 556; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fols. 323-24, 337-40; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 46-47; AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 2, decree of October 12, 1666.

<sup>6</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fol. 323-24; AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 2, decree of February 15, 1667.

<sup>7</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fols. 342, 331-32, 325-26; AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 2, decree of August 19, 1669.

That such orders were actually enforced is indicated by another ordinance of La Reynie, dated March 14, 1670, which listed seizures of illegal lace found between 1667 and 1670,<sup>8</sup> and ordered the goods burned at the gate of the Grand Chatelet at 2 P. M. on March 22, 1670. A decree of the Council of State issued three days later gives some insight into the problems facing the lace company and the efforts of the government to help it. After describing the foundation and purposes of the royal lace manufacture, the decree declared that the entrepreneurs were "continually crossed by some evilly intentioned merchants, who, because they had not been associated with the enterprise, strove to destroy it in all possible ways." These merchants took advantage of the clause in the original declaration forbidding the entrepreneurs to interfere with existing lace-workers, and under cover of this proviso hired away the employees of the lace company after they had been trained in the art. These workers were secretly used to make imitations of the French point, to the great detriment of the entrepreneurs. The decree therefore forbade the manufacture or sale of any such imitations and prohibited the making of other sorts of lace as well, in places where the company had its offices established.<sup>9</sup>

Another decree, of November 6, 1672, was designed to prevent the smuggling into France of Venetian and Genoese lace. It denied such lace the entrepôt rights that had been granted to goods in 1664. In 1673 a theft from a public coach led to a lawsuit, which revealed that quantities of lace were being smuggled into France via the generality of Sois-

<sup>8</sup> The seizures included:

1. A handkerchief seized from Jeanne Sarazin, worker, October 1, 1667, and also two pieces of Venetian point;

2. Some Genoa point seized on February 7, 1668, at the home of a woman named Blondel;

3. Three-fourths of an ell of various widths of foreign lace seized May 14, 1668, from François Mignon, merchant;

4. Three-fourths of an ell of new foreign point seized from Charles Garnault, son of a merchant, July 5, 1668;

5. A handkerchief of foreign point seized June 14, 1668, in the home of Helaine Dangest, worker;

6. A handkerchief of foreign point seized January 4, 1670, from a female worker named Hugot;

7. A *tablier* and a handkerchief of foreign point seized in the house of a widow named Pesche on July 5, 1668;

8. Five handkerchiefs of foreign point seized on July 20, 1668, in the homes of Catherine Thierry, and Marguerite d'Huy, workers.

There were many other seizures cited. See "Manuscripts Français," No. 21,788, fols. 344-46.

<sup>9</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,788, fols. 344-46; 333-35.

sons. The government took steps to prosecute the smuggler. In general, however, the outbreak of the Dutch war in 1672 distracted Colbert's attention from the lace industry, prevented subsidies from the state, and reduced the market for lace. At the same time, the company was encountering difficulties in many localities. Its monopoly was therefore allowed to lapse in 1674. Thereafter, some of the members of the company supported, or in some cases competed with, establishments made by it in the earlier period. Some of the local manufacturing centers were closed, others persisted under various auspices. In still others French point lace continued to be made under no control whatever from Paris.<sup>10</sup>

*Aid from Colbert.*—At the period of the end of the monopoly and the dissolution of the company, despite the distractions of the war, the government took steps to preserve the industry it had so sedulously fostered. The original declaration on lace in 1665 had exempted the new French point from all import, export, and transit duties. As soon as the company's privilege lapsed, the tax farmers began to collect such taxes on lace. By a decree of February 16, 1675, the king announced that while the entrepreneurs of the *manufacture royale* were no longer to have any exclusive privileges, still he had no intention of depriving those who made lace of the advantages which had been granted them. The decree therefore ordered that no lace made in France was to pay any import, export, or transit duties, or other taxes.<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, the prohibition against the importation and use of foreign lace was gradually relaxed. A decree of the Council of State of April 8, 1681, for instance, permitted the importation of Flemish lace, under conditions laid down by an old ordinance of July, 1660, that is, all Flemish lace brought into the area of the "five big farms" was to be imported via the office at Peronne.<sup>12</sup>

During the years when the lace company was flourishing, Colbert kept an anxious eye on the lace industry at Venice, in the hope of seeing it decrease notably. In August, 1669, he wrote the French ambassador at Venice, M. de Saint-André, to ask how the lace manufacture there was getting on. In October, 1669, he made a similar inquiry, and wished to know also if French merchants were still ordering lace in

<sup>10</sup> AD XI, No. 34, *liasse 2*, decrees of May 6, 1673; AD XI, No. 53, *liasse 1*, doc. 11; Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 258-59; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 370-71.

<sup>11</sup> AD XI, No. 34, *liasse 2*, decree of February 16, 1675.

<sup>12</sup> AD XI, No. 34, *liasse 2*, decree of April 8, 1681.

Venice. A month later he wrote Saint-André that if the French continued to buy lace in Venice, the manufacture in France would be "greatly retarded." He told the ambassador to find out what merchants were making such purchases, so that "one might work henceforth to disgust them with it."<sup>13</sup>

In October, 1670, Colbert wrote again to Saint-André:

It is indeed an advantage that the mourning for Madame<sup>14</sup> caused the sale of lace made at Venice to stop; but as this mourning is now over, I beg you to continue always to observe everything that goes on in connection with this matter.<sup>15</sup>

Three years later Colbert was less worried about the lace that might be brought into France from Venice. The comte d'Avaux sent Colbert a collar of Venetian lace. Colbert thanked him for it, said it was very beautiful, and added, "I will compare it with those which are made in our manufactures; but I must say to you in advance that those that are made in the kingdom are as beautiful." In a *mémoire* after the close of the Dutch war, Colbert declared that the French efforts had ruined the lace industry in Genoa and Venice and had thus deprived those cities of 3,600,000 *livres* a year. But in 1682 Colbert was still writing to find out what was going on in the lace business at Venice.<sup>16</sup>

A letter of the same year, July 29, 1682, to Le Blanc, the intendant of Rouen, indicates that Colbert felt that the Venetian situation was well in hand, but that there was some necessity of cutting down the importation of Flemish lace. He said:

The application which I have for establishing in France all the manufactures that enter from foreign countries obliges me to write you these lines to tell you that lace of Flanders is being much used and is coming into the kingdom to the extent of nearly 2,000,000 *livres* a year; the merchants are making an effort to establish these sorts of products in the places where the points of France are established, but up to now they have not been able to succeed as well as might be desired, and the same merchants have advised me that this establishment might be made at Havre de Grace by workers who are accustomed to make lace in that city; and as that would be a great advantage for the city of Havre and for the whole province of Normandy, I feel that it is necessary that in making your inspection of your generality you should stop for some days in that city of Havre to examine,

<sup>13</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 484; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 258, 304.

<sup>14</sup> Henrietta, daughter of Charles I of England, wife of Philippe d'Orléans, the brother of Louis XIV. She died June 30, 1670, aged twenty-six.

<sup>15</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 570-71.

<sup>16</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 122; II<sup>2</sup>, 672; "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fol. 28.

with the *maire* and *échevins* of the city, the means which might be employed to establish there this manufacture; and if it is necessary to do something on this subject in behalf of the king, if you let me know about it, I will see to it. I beg you to give especial attention to this matter, which is one of very great importance.<sup>17</sup>

Colbert was also interested in introducing the manufacture of Flemish lace at Alençon.<sup>18</sup> But this interest of Colbert in Flemish lace is marked, only in the last years of his career. Before that, he gave his attention chiefly to the French point imitation of Venetian lace. The general trend of government policy toward the lace industry under Colbert having been discussed, it remains to point out the history of the specific efforts made by the lace company in various localities, under Colbert's guidance. The declaration of May, 1665, had indicated 8 cities as centers for the new lace industry, but the decree of October 21 of the same year had permitted the establishment of still other centers. The entrepreneurs availed themselves of this permission, to a certain extent. At one time or another, efforts were made to found the manufacture of French point in dozens of places, including Quesnoy, Sedan, Château-Thierry, Lagny, Reims, Charleville, Chantilly, the faubourg Saint-Antoine of Paris, Arras, Auxerre, Châtillon-sur-Seine, Tonnerre, Autun, Sens, Noyers in Burgundy, Alençon, Séz, Argentan, Dieppe, Falaise, Verneuil, Mortagne in Normandy, Nevers, La Flèche, Le Mans, Angers, Tours, Montargis, Blois, Bourges, Issoudun, Riom, Saint-Flour, Aurillac, Poitiers, Loudun, Bordeaux, and Toulouse. In some localities, like Poitiers, the industry never took root at all. In others it flourished briefly and then expired. But in a score or so of places it achieved some measure of success. Colbert's statement in 1670, that there were 20,000 people, in 52 places, busy making French point lace, was, however, probably an exaggeration. A more detailed discussion of the developments at a few of these centers is necessary to make clear the methods, the scope, and the limitations of the work of the lace company.<sup>19</sup>

*Auxerre.*—In one manufacturing center Colbert had a peculiar interest. His extensive estates at Seignelay attracted his attention to the town of Auxerre, some ten miles distant, while his theories convinced him that the way to enhance the prosperity of the district was to endow it

<sup>17</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fol. 83; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 725-26; Bondonio, *Reims et Sedan*, p. 399, note 177.

<sup>18</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 725-26.

<sup>19</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 242; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 192; Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 427-28.

with industrial establishments. In 1664, while on a visit to his estates, he called together the chief inhabitants of the area, explained to them the value of industries, and by the weight of his authority persuaded them to create a fund of 5,000 *livres* to be used in founding the manufacture of London serges, knitted woolen stockings, and French point lace.<sup>20</sup>

It was not, however, until 1666, a year after the foundation of the lace company, that a "bureau of the French point" was actually opened at Auxerre. In April, 1666, Colbert forwarded to the *maire* of that city royal letters founding a lace manufacture there. In an accompanying missive he wrote rather severely,

I know that the inhabitants of Auxerre are not given to work, and spend part of their lives in idleness. I hope that this new occupation may change their propensity.<sup>21</sup>

An *échevin* of the town, who was then in Paris, thanked Colbert in behalf of Auxerre. A house was rented for 300 *livres* a year, to be paid by the town. A lady named Mme de la Petitière, who had learned the art of making lace in Venice, was put in charge of the new establishment. She was to be paid 600 *livres* a year by the town, but this sum was later supplemented by the lace company and by gifts from the royal funds of 600 *livres* each in 1668, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1679, and perhaps in other years. This lady was the wife of an impecunious soldier of fortune. Her husband appeared occasionally on the scene, but he counted for so little that she was usually referred to by her maiden name of Voullemin. In May, 1665, Mme de Voullemin (or La Petitière) arrived at Auxerre in a state of pregnancy, which does not seem seriously to have interfered with her assumption of her new duties. In June Pluimers, as active head of the company, was writing her on how to put the girls to work and how to keep them in order at meal-times. There was some trouble with the women who were sent to teach lace-making and with the girl workers, who were accused of going out too much in the evenings. Mme de Voullemin herself was incapacitated temporarily in the fall by the birth of her child.<sup>22</sup> But on the whole the first months of the new establishment were full of promise. The town officials wrote Colbert of the increase in the number of workers, and to

<sup>20</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, p. 208.

<sup>21</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, p. 212.

<sup>22</sup> She wrote to Mme Colbert, asking her to be the godmother of the child. The relations between Mme Voullemin and Colbert were almost uniformly pleasant, as he seems to have had great confidence in her.



pledge their coöperation. The bishop of Auxerre, even, wrote of his interest in the project.<sup>23</sup>

Colbert, in the meanwhile, urged the leading citizens of Auxerre to visit the manufacture, so as to show their solicitude for it and to help to keep the girls in order. He himself, before the end of the year, sent an agent to inspect the establishment and to stiffen its discipline. Things seem to have gone fairly well until the middle of 1667, when the company sent to Auxerre an agent who was a Protestant. This in itself was unfortunate, since the town prided itself on having no Protestants. But the agent made matters much worse by talking about reducing wages. The *maire* <sup>and</sup> wrote to Colbert to protest. But the municipal officials themselves were not above reproach, for on September 22, 1667, Colbert had to write to order them to pay Mme de Voullemin her salary. He went on to direct them to

see with great regularity that the girls of the city do not work in their houses in private, but only in that of the entrepreneurs. I beg you also to send me a list of all the fathers who have three of their children in the manufactures, and to let me know if there are any worthy women of the city who are present in the house of manufacture when work is going on, so as to set an example for the others.<sup>24</sup>

The *échevins* hastened to reply that several ladies of distinction had offered to give all the time necessary to supervising the lace manufacture. But Colbert wrote again on October 4, 1667, with more explicit directions:

As soon as the vintage season is over, I would be very pleased to have a list of the girls who go to work at the manufacture of French point so as to show it to the king, as also that of the inhabitants who have three children in this manufacture, and the others, so as to relieve them of the *taille*, as you have agreed. I beg you to note with care that no girl must be allowed to work at the home of her parents and that you must oblige them all to go to the house of the manufacture, it being certain that the products will thereby be much more beautiful, much better, and much more saleable. You will continue, if you please, to inform me of the ladies who are present in this house while work is going on there, to stimulate the efforts of the girls, and by their presence to keep them within the bounds of respect and modesty suitable to their sex.<sup>25</sup>

In the autumn of 1667 Mme de Voullemin complained to Colbert that Camuset was luring away her girls by offering them better terms in

<sup>23</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 210, 212-15.

<sup>24</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 215-18; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 441; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 286, 444, 558, 641, 707, 1112.

<sup>25</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 218-19; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 441, note 3.

the stocking manufacture. In the dispute, Colbert supported Mme Voullemin and Camuset was forced first to disclaim any hostile intentions and then to beat a retreat. During the imbroglio, Bouchu, the intendant of Burgundy, investigated the claim that the girls could not earn sufficient wages in the lace manufacture to make such employment attractive. He reported to Colbert that as a matter of fact the girls could earn quite respectable salaries—6 *sous*, 8 *sous*, even 10 *sous*, or more a day.<sup>26</sup>

At about the same time Colbert intervened in the municipal politics of Auxerre to secure the réélection as *maire* of a man named Billard. Mme de Voullemin pleaded his cause and Colbert probably felt that he would be more ardent in support of the new manufactures than the opposing candidate. Billard was réélected on November 4, 1667, and he wrote the next day to thank Colbert and to assure him that he would coöperate with the intendant, Bouchu, in improving the new industries. A month later he reported to Colbert that a hundred girls were at work in the lace manufacture.<sup>27</sup>

His figures agree with those of Mme de Voullemin, for on November 22, 1667, she wrote Colbert that there were about a hundred girls making lace. Certain workers who had deserted had been forced to return by M. Lemuet, the governor of the town. About fifty of the girls came to the house of manufacture to work. Despite Colbert's orders, it was impossible to force the rest to do so. Mme de Voullemin remarked that she was having trouble with the lace company, which wished her to force her girls to make a different kind of lace.<sup>28</sup> She refused to change, because the girls had already been taught one style. It was hard enough to get workers at all, she claimed, without trying to make them undergo a second apprenticeship. The royal officials of the town had coöperated with her, Mme Voullemin declared, in a house-to-house visit to suppress the manufacture of lace under any auspices save those of the company. Several pieces of illegal lace had been seized, but Mme de Voullemin, after giving the offenders a stiff warning, had secured the return of the goods. The indefatigable directress likewise reported that some of the ladies of the town dropped in occasionally at the house

<sup>26</sup> See above, pp. 225-26. Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 814; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fol. 215; Bondois, *Auxerre*, pp. 219-20.

<sup>27</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 76, 355; Bondois, *Auxerre*, p. 222.

<sup>28</sup> They wished her to have the girls work at "lace on the cushion" (*le point sur le coussin*) instead of "lace on the finger" (*le point sur le doigt*). The former referred to lace made with a crocheting hook, the latter to lace made with a needle. In addition, Mme de Voullemin had some girls working on embroidery (*broderie*) and others on *brides*, which were the tissues used to join the lace flowers together.

of manufacture, but she expressed the wish that one of them could be there all the time.<sup>29</sup>

When Bouchu had visited the establishment at Auxerre a little while before, Mme de Voullemin had complained that many of her girls were working privily on coarse old-style lace, the point of Paris rather than the new French point. It was due to Bouchu's report, no doubt, that steps were taken to suppress such clandestine contravention of the law. Bouchu also wrote that he had gone into the room where the girls worked

to make them a little speech of admonition, and to stimulate them to work with care. This I did. I found them there to the number of thirty, and after having exhorted them to do well, to temper my corrections I gave them two gold *louis* to eat together, and they promised me that they would work with greater application than in the past.<sup>30</sup>

Another visitor to Auxerre was the prince de Condé, governor of Burgundy. He came to the town in December, 1667, and urged the municipal officials to support the new manufactures, "as the only way to render themselves worthy of the favors of the Court, to retain the good will of M. Colbert, and to merit the protection that he himself as governor of the province could grant them."<sup>31</sup>

Early in the new year, encouraged by such support, Mme de Voullemin wrote that things were going much better, and that "patience and time" would assuredly bring satisfactory results. At the same period the intendant was hopeful that the manufactures of Burgundy would secure substantial benefits from the Estates of that province, in the form of a money contribution.<sup>32</sup> But the situation at Auxerre was rendered increasingly difficult by growing strife between Mme de Voullemin and the entrepreneurs of the lace company. In March, 1668, Pluimers wrote her to complain of the fact that she had so few girls working at embroidery and at "lace on the cushion." He grew indignant at the suggestion that the company pay her 250 *livres* a quarter, of which 150 *livres* was her salary<sup>33</sup> and 100 *livres* was to cover her expenses. He made a number of personal remarks, such as a reference to her "lack of

<sup>29</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 220-22.

<sup>30</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 222-23; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 814.

<sup>31</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, p. 224.

<sup>32</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 224-25. The letter of January 15, 1668, refers, I feel sure, to contributions to be secured from the Estates of Burgundy, not from the citizens of Auxerre.

<sup>33</sup> This arrangement had been suggested by Colbert. Apparently the 600 *livres'* salary was to supplement the sums due her from the town.

zeal for the success of this establishment," and a declaration that the company would have done better to send to Auxerre a simple mistress of the art of lace-making at 250 *livres* a year.

Mme de Voullemin was not a lady to take such a rebuke without retaliation. She straightway dispatched her husband to Colbert with a long letter full of self-justification and of denunciation of the entrepreneurs. With it she sent a series of documentary exhibits labeled A, B, and C, to prove that she was right in the dispute. She claimed to have done everything possible to encourage the girls to make embroidery and "lace on the cushion." She insisted that the "lace on the finger" being made at Auxerre was equal to that of Venice in beauty and superior in "delicacy and whiteness." She told of her "assiduity from morning till evening." She assured Colbert of her devotion to him and of her complete obedience to his orders, while on the contrary the entrepreneurs were, she felt, continually going against Colbert's wishes.

In the dispute Colbert upheld Mme de Voullemin, but urged her to train her girls to make "lace on the cushion." The directress assured him that she would try to do so, overwhelmed him with thanks, asserted that she had trained at Auxerre 200 girls, and announced that when they became a little more skillful the already large output of the establishment would be still further increased. She complained that the ladies of the city interfered with her work by hiring girls to make lace privately and she urged that this practice be stopped. If the entrepreneurs felt that they could not afford the 1,000 *livres* a year which Colbert wished them to pay her, Mme de Voullemin was ready with a suggestion that would save them 95 percent of that sum. At Auxerre they had 3 mistresses of lace-making, each of whom received 250 *livres* a year, and an agent who was paid 450 *livres* a year. Let them dismiss 2 of the mistresses and the agent, and Mme de Voullemin herself would take charge of all phases of the manufacture.<sup>84</sup>

Aside from difficulties with the entrepreneurs, the establishment at Auxerre was hampered by the disinclination of the local girls to work regularly at the manufacture and of their parents to force them to do so. After careful consideration, Colbert, in July, 1668, wrote the *échevins* of the town a letter in which he outlined the methods by which the problem might be solved. He said:

Since the last letter that I wrote you about forcing the girls who have been taught by Mme de la Pethitière to make French point to work at the

<sup>84</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 226-30.

bureau of this manufacture with assiduity, I have examined the means by which that may be done successfully. After much thought on the matter, I have found that the surest means would be to appoint one of you to go to this bureau at least twice a week so as to hear there the complaints that the aforesaid lady may have grounds for making in this connection; to oblige the chief women of each parish to go there in turn every day, morning and evening, so as to constrain the workers to duty and assiduity by their presence; to levy some light fine on the girls' parents if they tolerate their absence from work; and finally to see that the chief houses of the city should not suborn the best lace-makers to get them to work for them. With all these precautions, I feel that we shall attain the end of perfecting this manufacture, and that you will soon become aware of the benefit that the city of Auxerre will derive therefrom; I entreat you to see to this immediately.<sup>35</sup>

At about the same time Colbert arranged for the distribution of "gratifications" to the "most skillful and assiduous workers." Mme de Voullemin enthusiastically approved the steps he had outlined, and wrote him that if the town authorities could be persuaded to follow his suggestions the combination of "hope and fear" acting on the workers would bring success to the establishment. She reported that not counting some nuns who were making lace in certain convents, there were 101 workers on the lists of the establishments. Of these 35 were busy on embroidery, 62 on point lace, and 4 on *brides*. The sums paid out for work done in the last month had totaled 437 *livres*, 10 *sous*. These figures are fairly typical of the years 1668 and 1669, as is shown by figures tabulated by Bondoïs.<sup>36</sup> They indicate that the girls may have

<sup>35</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, p. 231.

<sup>36</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 231-32, 271; cf. Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 819; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 319-23. The figures are of considerable interest, since they show clearly the size of the establishment. Omitting the convents working for the manufacture, which seem to have been of little account and which varied from 4 in September, 1668, to 1 in May, 1669, the figures are:

PERIOD	POINT-MAKERS		EMBROIDERY-MAKERS		BRIDE-MAKERS		TOTALS		SUMS PAID FOR WORK
	NUMBER	PIECES MADE	NUMBER	PIECES MADE	NUMBER	PIECES MADE	WORKERS	PIECES	
August 23 to									
Sept. 22, 1668	61	73	30	75	2	2	93	150	<i>Livres</i> 449 <i>Sous</i> 9
Dec. 1, 1668 to									
Jan. 8, 1669	59	100	33	60	4	24	96	184	537 7
Jan. 8 to									
Feb. 16, 1669	65	98	30	93	5	33	100	224	637 18
March 16 to									
April 27, 1669	56	80	33	96	3	19	92	195	704 4½
April 27 to									
May 31, 1669	62	92	28	70	5	19	95	181	687

had some reason to be reluctant to work, since the average wages secured were only about 6 *livres* a month. Even though this represented pay for irregular work, the returns were not munificent. In contrast, the prices secured by company for the lace were very high. A French point handkerchief might bring from 160 *livres* up to almost 200 *livres*. A neckband (*rabat*) might be priced from 130 *livres* to over 150 *livres* or more. A narrow piece of lace about a yard long might fetch almost 100 *livres*.<sup>37</sup> People were probably still willing to pay high prices because they were accustomed to pay them for Venetian lace. But the company must have limited its market by charging so much, as it must have alienated its workers by paying them so little. It cannot be wondered that the girls gladly deserted the manufacture when the vintage season came around. One cannot help trying to guess, also, what was the cost of the costume which Mme de Sévigné saw Mme de Montespan wearing one afternoon in July, 1676. "She was dressed entirely in French point lace."<sup>38</sup>

*Complaints and troubles.*—The latter part of 1668 saw Mme de Voullemin harassed by a new difficulty. The exemptions from the *taille*, which had been granted to the fathers of families who had children working in the manufactures, was not observed by the tax collectors. The intendant, Bouchu, added his report to the complaints of the directress, and a decree of the Council of State was issued on November 29, 1668, to remedy the situation. It provided that a fund of 2,000 *livres* should be set aside each year. From this should be paid *in toto* the *tailles* of all workers in the manufactures of London serges, woolen stockings, and French point lace at Auxerre, to the extent of 5 *livres* each. A similar reduction of 5 *livres* was to be granted for each child working in one of the manufactures. Children were to be counted for this exemption, only if they went to the manufacture "assiduously during all the year, at least four times a week," though illness could be pleaded as an excuse for absences. All workers in the manufactures were to be divided into 3 classes, according to their skill. To those of the first class was to be given an additional "recompense" of one *sou* for each day they

<sup>37</sup> It is interesting to note that the company had standardized and numbered its patterns, so that pieces of lace would be described thus: "Fine, a handkerchief, No. 162—182 *livres*, 10 *sous*"; or "A neck-band, No. 179—130 *livres*, 2 *sous*"; or "4½ ells, No. 139—309 *livres*, 10 *sous*." See "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 161, fols. 233–36.

<sup>38</sup> Bondois, *Auxerre*, pp. 272–73, 232; F. Funck-Brentano, *The Old Regime in France*, p. 170.

worked. Those of the second class were to receive 6 *deniers*, and those of the third 4 *deniers*.

The decree also provided that all inhabitants of Auxerre, save only "officers of justice," were to be required to send to one or another of the manufactures all their children over six years of age, under penalty of a fine of 30 *sous* for each child not so sent. To pay the "recompenses," a fund of 3,500 *livres* was to be set aside each year. This money, together with the sums necessary for the payment of the *taille* exemptions, the salaries of Mme de Voullemin and Camuset, and the rent of the buildings for the wool-stocking and lace manufactures, was to be raised by a wine tax on all wine made in, sold in, and sent out of Auxerre, and on all wine passing over or under the bridge of La Chesne de Monestau, together with a tax of one *denier* per loaf on all white bread.

The decree further provided that from April to September the hours of labor in the three manufactures should be from 7 A.M. to 11 A.M. and from 1 P.M. to 4 P.M. Elaborate checks were established to safeguard the expenditure of the money, the bookkeeping of the manufactures, and the keeping of records as to the attendance of the workers.<sup>39</sup>

Early in January, 1669, while waiting for an enforcing order by the intendant which would put this decree into effect, Mme de Voullemin wrote asking Colbert for some immediate gratifications for her girls, since they were getting impatient. She reported that the plan of having ladies of the town visit the manufacture to help keep the girls in order had not worked. None had come for four weeks and when they did come "the inconvenience from their idle chatter" outweighed any benefits derived from their presence. She urged the enforcement of the provision for regular gratifications for the girls, asked that the *échevins* visit the manufacture at stated intervals, and insisted that the parents of girls who were not regular at work be fined.<sup>40</sup>

As it turned out, the local magistrates proved unwilling to enforce such clauses of the decree. Mme de Voullemin had been enthusiastic about the new *maire*, sieur Marie, but she rapidly became critical, since he and his fellow officials, while promising Colbert to coöperate to the best of their ability, actually neglected to force the girls to go to work, tried to nullify the financial provisions of the decree, and refused to help to stop the girls from working at home. By February Mme de

<sup>39</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 232-34, 267-70.

<sup>40</sup> Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 235-36.

Voullemin was complaining to Colbert of the attitude of the town authorities and urging him to make them enforce the decree.

In April, 1669, Colbert sent out one of the members of the lace company, Amonnet by name, to inspect a number of the establishments. From Auxerre Amonnet reported that there were 180 girls working for the establishment, and 40 who had learned the art, but had begun to make illegal lace for other persons than the entrepreneurs. The lace was fine. A distribution of rewards to those girls actually working at the manufacture had had "a marvelous effect." Indeed, in view of the careful supervision of Mme de Voullemin, Amonnet had high hopes for the future.<sup>41</sup>

A few days later Mme de Voullemin wrote that on Saturday April 6, the *maire* and *échevins* had given out gratifications to the workers. The following Monday and Tuesday a third more girls than usual had turned up at the manufacture. The gratifications for the girls were paid the next month also, and their "avidity" to receive this money and the exemption from the *tailles* seemed to be producing salutary effects. Mme de Voullemin felt that these benefits could be increased by threatening to withhold the payments and exemptions of those girls who were not sufficiently "modest" and "industrious."

But another problem that had been mentioned several times in the correspondence about the manufacture was pushing itself to the fore. A good many of the girls, trained at the bureau, were making lace in the style of the point of Paris for various persons and merchants. On May 11, 1669, Mme de Voullemin wrote of this problem and said that she had learned that a wig-maker of Auxerre, named des Prez, had sent four handkerchiefs of point of Paris to Paris in a shipment of hair. Three weeks later Mme de Voullemin informed Colbert that the girls must be prevented from working on the point of Paris, for it dulled their skill in making the finer French point. In September Colbert wrote the *échevins* a stiff letter, urging them to aid and supervise the manufactures.

In October, 1669, Mme de Voullemin reported a veritable orgy of visits and inspections. On the eleventh the *maire* Marie had come to pay the girls their gratifications for the past month. Eight days later the intendant had visited the manufacture in the morning, and in the afternoon the marquis de la Rivière had arrived with his wife and another

<sup>41</sup> Bondoio, *Auxerre*, pp. 236-39; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 819.



lady. On the twenty-third M. and Mme de Lalande had stopped in. They had "exaggerated to the girls the harm they did by working for others" than the entrepreneurs, and they had explained to various ladies of the city how such outside work impaired the success of the manufacture. Mme de Voullemin reported that 129 girls were working for the manufacture, of whom about two-thirds came regularly. She complained that the "chief houses" of the city were contravening the royal regulations in connection with manufactures and were being supported by their friends and relatives among the municipal officials. Further strife between Mme de Voullemin and the company had also begun. She declared that after urging her to encourage embroidery work, they had now directed her to stop it. If she did so, it would thrust a number of her workers into enforced idleness.<sup>42</sup>

The remarks of the directress stirred Colbert to action, for on November 3, 1669, shortly after he received her letter he wrote to the municipal officials of Auxerre in these terms:

Gentlemen, having learned that some of the chief inhabitants of your city are having work done in their homes by workers who are employed in the manufacture of French point lace, a thing which prevents their going to the house where it is established as assiduously as might be desired, I write you that, there being nothing so contrary to the growth of this manufacture and to the benefit which the public might receive from it, it is very important that you make use of the authority vested in you by your positions to stop so considerable an abuse, and that you should enforce the ordinance to oblige these workers to go regularly to the aforesaid house without any regard or distinction as to persons. And since there might occur some contraventions which should be remedied promptly, I feel it very necessary that you appoint one of your body to visit this house three times a week, seeing especially that the remuneration is paid to the workers punctually at the end of each month, as they have been promised.<sup>43</sup>

Though the *maire* and *échevins* continued to supervise the manufacture and pay the monthly remunerations, their hearts were not in their task. Another letter from Colbert in November, 1669, encouraged them to greater efforts. But by January, 1670, the minister was obviously becoming exasperated. On the twenty-fourth of that month he wrote them:

The establishment of manufactures was judged a certain means to retrieve those who engaged in them from the shameful idleness in which they

<sup>42</sup> Bondoï, *Auxerre*, pp. 240-45; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 158, fols. 319-20.

<sup>43</sup> Bondoï, *Auxerre*, pp. 245-46, note 1.

are plunged, and at the same time to bring them an ample livelihood; it is for this that the king had that of French point lace brought into your city. But since the inhabitants of Auxerre have not up till now profited from an arrangement so happily advantageous to them, and since they have even neglected to send their children to the aforesaid manufactures to be taught there, they have not derived all the benefit that they might justly have hoped for. And I am convinced that if you see to the levying of fines and proceed to the distribution of remunerations and exemptions according to the regulations, inspiring everyone by your example and by your frequent visits, you will attain the end which His Majesty set himself in these establishments. As for myself, I admit to you, that having worked to make them succeed in your city with much more effort and care than in all the others of the kingdom, I am very vexed to see there so little progress.<sup>44</sup>

The exhortations and reproaches of Colbert seem to have had little effect, for on August 8, 1670, he felt constrained to write again to the *maire* and *échevins*. He said:

I admit to you that I have been extremely surprised to learn that the manufacture of lace has not grown stronger than it has, and that the number of workers there is decreasing instead of increasing. I cannot tell you how astounded I am that your inhabitants have profited so ill from the care I have lavished and the trouble I have taken, while those at Sens, in whom I have not the same interest, consider a similar establishment a very great advantage for their city, and labor to remove the abuses that might hamper it.<sup>45</sup>

Colbert still insisted on the enforcement of the regulations as the certain method of improving the lace establishment and of rescuing "the lesser folk" (*petit peuple*) of the city from "the misery with which they were overwhelmed." He continued to urge on his aides to make the lace manufacture of Auxerre a success. In November, 1669, he wrote Bouchu, the intendant, that he must force the *maire* and *échevins* to put an end to the contraventions of the regulations, lest the establishment come to an untimely end. In January, 1671, he wrote to Mme de Voullemin to spur her to greater efforts. At the same time he sent to the *maire* and *échevins* a stern but somewhat weary letter:

Up till now, no matter how much I have stimulated those who have held the offices of your city, in the matter of the enforcement of the regulations made in connection with the manufacture of lace, it has been impossible to make them understand the advantages to be derived therefrom and that from it the inhabitants of that city would receive a considerable relief. How-

<sup>44</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 515-16; Bondonio, *Auxerre*, p. 247, note 3.

<sup>45</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 541-42; Bondonio, *Auxerre*, p. 248.

ever, since there is no better method to withdraw these girls from idleness and to secure for them an honest livelihood, do not fail to see to the enforcement of all these matters and to consult with Mme de la Petitière, in whom I have always recognized great zeal for the good of your city.<sup>46</sup>

In April, 1671, he again wrote to Mme de Voullemin and to the *maire* and *échevins*. The former he urged to continue her efforts. To the officials he said in part:

I must say to you once again that if you do not see to the rigorous enforcement of the aforesaid decrees, you will have perishing before your eyes a manufacture which causes the happiness and the relief of the other cities of the kingdom in which it has been established; as for myself, I would have the mortification of seeing that all my efforts had been useless in a city in which the proximity of my estate had caused me to take a special interest.<sup>47</sup>

At about this time the duc d'Enghien, who had succeeded his father, the prince de Condé, as governor of Burgundy, visited Auxerre and displayed a lively interest in the manufactures there. Colbert wrote to congratulate him on the improvement caused by his visit, and to express approval of a plan to give the workers considerable sums of money. Colbert added in his letter that the serge and stocking manufactures would not need such aid much longer, but that the lace manufacture would. It seemed to him certain that the lace establishment would in the long run "produce more advantages in this city than the other two." By this Colbert probably meant that more people could be employed at lace-making and more money could be brought in by it than by the other manufactures.

Mme de Voullemin had seized the opportunity of the duke's presence to give him a number of *mémoires* on the lace manufacture. Colbert found most of her suggestions ill-advised and told her so in a letter dated June 26, 1671. In particular, he found unsuitable her plan for increasing the special remunerations paid the workers by the town. He explained to her that such additional payments were proper to encourage apprentices to learn the art, and to stimulate parents to send girls to the manufacture. But once the girls were well trained, it should be unnecessary to give them anything save the sums due for their work.<sup>48</sup>

In August, 1671, Bellinzani was sent by Colbert to visit Auxerre. He recommended that the prices of lace be reduced and the organiza-

<sup>46</sup> Bondoï, *Auxerre*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>47</sup> Bondoï, *Auxerre*, pp. 250-51.

<sup>48</sup> Bondoï, *Auxerre*, pp. 251-53.

tion of the company be made more efficient. The company, which had endeavored to increase its profits by raising prices, acceded reluctantly to his suggestions. Early in 1672 Colbert began to use a new auxiliary in connection with the lace establishment at Auxerre. His brother Nicolas had been made bishop of that town, and in February Colbert wrote, urging him to visit and report on the lace manufacture, and pointing out that such enterprises were good both for "the spiritual and the temporal" welfare of the city. In March Nicolas heard complaints from the entrepreneurs that they were making no profit and passed them on to Colbert. In a letter of April 8, 1672, the minister undertook to enlighten his brother on the inner workings of the matter. He wrote:

As to the manufacture of the lace, I do not doubt that it is a burden on the entrepreneurs; but that comes from the lack of industrious application on the part of the girls and the lack of care on the part of the magistrates, since in all the cities of the kingdom where the girls have been willing to apply themselves and where the magistrates have done their duty, it is not a burden on anybody, but, on the contrary, it is very advantageous to the city and to the entrepreneurs, because it continually attracts money which spreads out everywhere; this should be the object of the efforts both of the chief people of the city and of the individual inhabitants. But the city of Auxerre is characterized by such prodigious laziness that it will be very difficult to change it. You can contribute a great deal by your efforts to arouse it and by your careful attention.<sup>49</sup>

Two months later, in a letter to Bouchu, Colbert declared his conviction that the manufacture of lace at Auxerre would have succeeded like those of stockings and of serges "if the magistrates had done their duty well in it." In a letter to Colbert, dated August 23, 1672, Mme de Voullemin likewise attributed the lack of success in the lace manufacture to the failure of the *maire* to coöperate. Despite such remarks, however, the figures given by her in the same missive show that the establishment was still fairly active. She announced that she had just sent to the entrepreneurs 7 handkerchiefs, 5 neckbands and 92½ ells of lace, to the value of 3,047 *livres*, 9 *sous*. On the other hand, the gloomy prognostications of Colbert were borne out by a list for October, 1672, which showed that only 33 workers and one convent had turned in lace during that month, but this poor showing was in part due to the annual exodus of workers to the vineyards.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 253-55; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 654.

<sup>50</sup> Bondoïs, *Auxerre*, pp. 255, 272-73. The date of the list of the lace shipment is given by Bondoïs, p. 272, as August, 1670; it was actually August, 1672. Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 656; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 161, fols. 233-36.

After 1672 the distractions of the Dutch war and the lack of success of the establishment tended to divert Colbert's attention from the lace manufacture at Auxerre. But he did not lose all interest in it. A letter from him to his brother, the bishop, on September 15, 1673, displays both his faith in the value of the project and his disgust at its partial failure. He wrote:

In regard to the manufacture of lace, I am convinced that the expenditures made for it from the *octrois* of the city are very useful and very necessary. The *maire* and *échevins* do not know what they are doing when they raise objections to giving it the aid and all the protection necessary to support this manufacture and increase it. As this city wishes to return to the idleness and to the nothingness which characterized it, and since it does not wish to profit from the opportunities which I have given it to get out of this bad condition, the other matters with which I am burdened and my health, which is not such as to permit me to work as much as I used to formerly, force me to abandon it to its evil ways. If you, by your authority, can prevent this, I believe that you will be conferring a great benefit on it. But I refuse to fight forever against the small-mindedness of M. Billard and the other rulers of this city.<sup>51</sup>

Billard, whom Colbert singled out for blame, was a former *maire* of Auxerre, and had advanced to the post of president of the *présidial*.<sup>52</sup> This official, apparently aware of Colbert's feelings, defended himself to the minister by blaming Mme de Voullemin, and insisting that he himself had been most zealous for the welfare of the lace establishment. When, however, the time came in 1674 to renew the lease on the house which the town had taken years earlier for the lace manufacture, Billard and his followers among the local officials endeavored to force Mme de Voullemin to move to an inferior building. As usual, that lady appealed to Colbert, and as usual he seems to have upheld her, for there is evidence that the lace manufacture was still housed in the original building as late as 1686. In 1674, likewise, Colbert instructed Bouchu to continue the pension of Mme de Voullemin and to see that the exemptions were continued for the fathers of children working in the manufacturing establishments.

It was in 1674, also, that other problems rose to confront Mme de Voullemin. The monopoly of the lace company lapsed in that year. One of the entrepreneurs, Amonnet, who had shown special interest in the

<sup>51</sup> Bondoio, *Auxerre*, p. 256.

<sup>52</sup> The *présidiaux* were subordinate courts, with jurisdiction over both criminal and civil cases.

establishment at Auxerre, continued to support it, and to provide for the sale of the lace produced there. But on February 8, 1674, Mme de Voullemin wrote Colbert that an agent named d'Ursey had been sent to Auxerre by a group of the entrepreneurs with headquarters at the Hotel de Beaufort in Paris. He had established himself in a house and adorned it with a sign reading *Manufacture royale du point-de-France*. Moreover, d'Ursey had gone from house to house to enlist workers and he had made free use of the name of Colbert. Whether Colbert suppressed d'Ursey or whether his establishment died a natural death is not clear. But nothing more was heard of it.

The lace manufacture presided over by Mme de Voullemin, and so zealously fostered by Colbert, seems to have continued for many years. It was still receiving aid from the municipal funds as late as 1686, and it or some outgrowth from it was still in existence in the very last years of the century. After 1674 its status must have been that of a semiprivate enterprise, under the control of Amonnet or some other merchant. Mme de Voullemin received 600 *livres* from royal funds in recognition of her services as late as May 16, 1679. But from 1674 or 1675 on, this establishment ceases to figure in the preserved correspondence of Colbert.<sup>53</sup>

The mediocre success, or what might even be called the relative failure of the lace manufacture at Auxerre, was a bitter pill to Colbert. He had lavished on it much thought and constant care, for a decade. He had developed for it a system of support derived from the town and to a certain degree from the province. He had enlisted in its behalf the service of a score of important people, including a prince, a bishop, and an intendant. He had sought to secure workers for it by playing on the age-old motives of hope and fear. Yet it had not responded to his efforts by growing to a position of real importance. The reasons for the result are obscure. They were probably connected with local conditions, with the low wages paid to workers, with the high prices charged by the company for lace, with sabotage by municipal officials and by merchants excluded from the company, and with the personality of Mme de Voullemin. It would be rash to suggest on the basis of the available information that there was anything intrinsically erroneous in the procedure of Colbert.

<sup>53</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 689; Bondonis, *Auxerre*, pp. 256-61; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 1112.

*Alençon.*—No other lace establishment stirred in Colbert the deep interest with which he followed the fate of that at Auxerre. But he gave many of them his constant attention. He was peculiarly vexed by the problems that beset the one at Alençon, for the difficulties which arose there made those encountered by Mme de Voullemin seem almost of a minor order. In Alençon there was an old established lace industry which gave employment to a great many workers. Much of the lace made was of the ordinary coarse variety, but a few years before the foundation of the French-point company a woman named La Perrière had introduced the manufacture of a lace called *velin* by the trade. She had trained a number of girls in the art of making it and so highly were their products esteemed that a collar might bring as much as 1,500 or 2,000 *livres*. Like the French point of the company, the *velin* was an imitation of fine Venetian lace. In a letter in 1665 the intendant of the area, Jacques Favier, seigneur du Boulay, explained to Colbert that lace was the manna of Alençon. It gave employment to children and to oldsters, it bought bread for the people, and paid their taxes. In Alençon, Falaise, Argentan, Sées, and other towns of the district, Favier estimated, there were about 8,000 persons making *velin*.<sup>54</sup>

The rumors of the organization of the monopolistic lace company in the spring of 1665, when they reached Alençon, seemed like a threat to the security and prosperity of many of its inhabitants, especially since the fact that the company was to have 200 workers there was interpreted to mean that only that number would be allowed to make lace. But the matter did not become crucial until August, when the entrepreneurs sent to that city an agent, named Jacques Prévost, to found there a bureau for the manufacture of French point. The fact that Prévost and his wife came from Alençon, were of low origin, and were personally unpopular, in no way tended to ease the situation. The first crisis came late in August, 1665, when a mob of 1,000 women, enraged by the activities of Prévost, assembled and pursued him with such fury that he had to seek asylum in the house of the intendant. That official protected Prévost's person and appeased the crowd. But he had no sympathy with the agent, for Prévost had begun his activities and distributed circulars about the new project without consulting the intendant. In fact, Favier du Boulay wrote to Colbert on August 31 that to

<sup>54</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 747-48; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 250.

quiet the people of the town the king would have to assure them that no one had any intention of interfering with their right to make lace freely. Upon receipt of this information, Colbert quickly secured the issuance of a royal decree dated September 3, 1665. Since Prévost had found such "great resistance" and since he was in such "evident danger of his life" at the hands of those who were stirring up trouble in Alençon, the decree put him, his wife, and his employees under direct protection of the king.<sup>55</sup>

A week later Prévost still did not dare to appear on the streets, and the town was still seething with unrest. At Colbert's suggestion, the intendant tried to explain the situation to the townspeople. He went further. He called in 8 or 10 of the chief merchants interested in lace, and as many of the women entrepreneurs who manufactured lace on the putting-out system. In conference with Prévost and the intendant, this group reached a compromise agreement. The company was to be allowed to secure 200 girls, whom it might teach to make the new French point. After it had done so, all other workers were to be freely allowed to make lace in the old styles, but their products were to be subject to inspection by the company's agents to prevent the use of its patterns by private individuals. In laying this compromise before Colbert for approval, Favier du Boulay suggested that the company be represented by some agent more acceptable to the town than Prévost.<sup>56</sup>

The compromise, as it stood, did not appeal to Colbert, since it limited too much the expansion of the company's establishment. New provisions were written into law by a decree of the Council of State on October 21, 1665, and by an ordinance issued by the intendant five days later. The decree began by telling of the delight with which Reims, Aurillac, Quesnoy, and Arras had hailed the establishment of a bureau of the lace company. At Aurillac the workers had voluntarily come in and begun to work. The new company, the decree pointed out, would prevent the export of money from France to Venice. Such considerations, however, had not weighed with Alençon, where "open rebellions" had hindered the creation of a bureau and had forced the king to make an "extraordinary application of his authority." When the bureau was actually opened, the decree declared, the lace merchants and

<sup>55</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 746; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 251; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 121-22, 128-29.

<sup>56</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 749-50; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 251.



dealers had so influenced the workers that they had refused to make French point, but had instead set themselves to counterfeit the company's "designs and patterns." It was therefore provided that no workers were to make any lace similar to that made by the company, under penalty of corporal punishment and confiscation of the goods. But they were to be free to make lace "not similar" to that made by the company. The intendant was ordered to enforce the decree. Its purpose seems to have been to keep the people contented by letting them work on the old-style coarse lace, but to divert to the company those who had been making imitations of Venetian lace.<sup>57</sup>

The enforcing ordinance of Favier du Boulay, validated by a decree of the Council of State of November 5, 1665, condemned the rumors concerning the lace bureau and the opposition to it. It alleged that the merchants had bribed the workers to stay away from it. It explained that the purpose of the new company was to perfect the lace made at Alençon by bringing in expert teachers from Venice and from Flanders. The bureau would receive not only 200 workers, but all those who came. They would find it much more advantageous to work for the company than for anyone else, especially since the king had promised special recompenses to good workers. Lest the "ill-will of the ill-intentioned individuals who have for an aim only their own interests, without considering those of the public, should prevail," the ordinance forbade all workers of Alençon to make any lace save for the entrepreneurs and according to their patterns. The intendant in his ordinance went further than the royal decree, probably because he felt that something drastic would have to be done to give the lace bureau a start.<sup>58</sup>

As officials went about posting copies of the intendant's new ordinance in the squares and public places of the city of Alençon, the outraged workers had the "insolence" to follow them about and tear down the offensive document. The "ill-intentioned" individuals incited the workers to continue to make the old Alençon point lace and to refuse to make the new French point. On November 1 the opposition forces gathered a crowd of "poor beggars to go and shout at and insult one of the directresses that His Majesty had sent to" the new lace bureau. The mob caught her in a carriage and shouted at her "a quantity of swear words and a number of threats."

<sup>57</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 118-20.

<sup>58</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 121-22.

Unwilling to tolerate such defiance of the royal will and such infringements of public order, the intendant issued on November 5 a new ordinance that was ferocious in its provisions. All workers and other persons connected with the lace bureau were placed under the direct protection of the king. Any inhabitant of Alençon who did or said anything against them was to suffer the penalty of death. No old-style Alençon point lace was to be made. Any that was made, was to be seized and sold. Of the proceeds of the sale two-thirds were to go to the king, one-third to the informer. Those guilty in connection with the riot against the directress were to be prosecuted and punished.<sup>59</sup>

The ordinance had the desired effect of stopping open disorders for a while. But difficulties continued to beset the new establishment. Catherine de Marcq, one of the original entrepreneurs of the lace company, had come down to Alençon to straighten matters out. On November 30, 1665, she wrote to Colbert that she was encountering great difficulty in enlisting workers, since they preferred to make the old Alençon point, and since the merchants were conspiring against the company. She had hoped to enlist thousands of workers, but she had secured only 700, and of these only 250 could be depended on. As a matter of fact, the opposition had merely been driven to cover. Rumors unfavorable to the company were continually being circulated, and "seditious" pamphlets were even published. While Alençon was thus boiling under the repressive enactments, Colbert replaced Favier du Boulay as intendant by the sieur de Marle. The former, though he had shown himself sympathetic toward the inhabitants in his first letters to Colbert, had been zealous enough, on paper at least, after that time. His change of tone had probably resulted from his learning of Colbert's views of the matter. That de Marle had no easy task before him is evidenced by a decree of the Council of State of February 19, 1666. Though it was couched in general terms, it was intended to apply especially to Alençon. It ordered the intendants and the judicial officials zealously to seek out and prosecute all those who spread rumors or issued pamphlets against the lace company.<sup>60</sup>

But worse than rumors and pamphlets was soon to come. In March, 1666, those opposed to the lace establishment brought into the city a

<sup>59</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 124-25.

<sup>60</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 125-29; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 441-42; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 750, note 1.

number of persons and arranged for them to attack the lace bureau. One night an attempt was actually made to break into the building where it was situated. The invaders got over the garden wall, but they were driven off before they had done any damage. The next outbreak was directed against Prévost, whom, despite his colossal unpopularity, the company had retained as its local agent.

On the night of March 20, 1665, Prévost went to take supper with a friend in the city. Very late, he turned his steps homeward to the lace bureau, where he lodged. At its door he was set upon by seven or eight ruffians, who leaped upon him with cries of "*Voilà le bougre de Prévost.*" The victim was armed only with a cane, but he laid about him stoutly and shouted for assistance. As luck would have it, a number of people were at hand and came running to his aid. A free-for-all fight ensued, in which one of Prévost's assailants was killed by a sword thrust and another was wounded.

Prévost entered a complaint on the affray with the intendant de Marle, though the *lieutenant-criminel*<sup>61</sup> of the *baillage* of Alençon was ready and anxious to take cognizance of the case. A royal decree of March 22, 1666, was issued on the matter. It declared the crime must be punished and that it would not be proper to let it come before the local judges, since in the beginning they had "showed much animosity against the entrepreneurs" of the lace manufacture. The decree therefore gave the intendant full jurisdiction over the case and forbade the *lieutenant-criminel* to take any part in it. The decree also announced that if anything further happened to Prévost, or his family, or his employees, the inhabitants of Alençon would be held accountable.<sup>62</sup>

After the attack on Prévost, and the swift steps taken by the government to punish the offenders, Alençon seems to have accepted the inevitable and to have extended to the lace bureau a modicum of coöperation. By the end of 1666 the intendant de Marle was calmly working out a plan to teach lace-making to the orphan girls of the vicinity. In April, 1667, he sent a lace handkerchief as a present to one of Colbert's daughters. In September, 1667, de Marle wrote Colbert a letter that is worth quoting for two reasons. First, it seems to show that the situation in the lace industry had become quite peaceable. Second, de

<sup>61</sup> The *lieutenant-criminel* was a judicial official who prepared criminal cases for trial and, with seven assistant judges, formed both a trial court and a court of appeal. The *baillage* was a judicial district.

<sup>62</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 128-29.

Marle came as close to being facetious as anyone dared to be in writing to Colbert. The letter reads: <sup>63</sup>

A little while ago, I was very much surprised to receive a delegation from our whole [lace] industry, and still more so when I learned that the purpose of their gathering was to make complaints to me against you. But you realize of course, Monsieur, that I was not in a sufficiently exalted position to have any right to investigate your conduct, and that likewise I was rather astonished that this industry should forget, in so short a time, what it owed to you because of the honor of your protection. All the arguments which I could bring forth serving only to intensify their feelings rather than to pacify them, I was forced to pretend that I was willing to side with them and against you, and, indeed, against the respect that I owe you; and then after having, in a long conference, seen clearly into their motives, I admit, Monsieur, please forgive me this liberty, that I found you at fault: because our whole industry, which up to now has made every effort to please you and to deserve the honor of your approval, has not been able to get you to ask of it a single one of its products. They fear that you distrust the appearance of progress that they are making every day, and that you do not believe that they can make anything worthy of being presented to you. You are too fair, Monsieur, to blame them for feeling this little slight, and I hope that in your kindness you will not condemn me, if to exculpate you and to reconcile you with our whole industry, I have ordered a handkerchief to be made for you, which I trust that you will be so good as to receive from them, as a sign that they are striving all the time to perfect the industry, and from me as a testimony of the passionate desire that I have to see succeed an industry that you have undertaken.

The pacification of Alençon had apparently been secured by rescinding the more drastic of the ordinances of Favier du Boulay and going back to a somewhat more liberal basis. Merchants were allowed to sell point of Paris and other old-style laces not made on the patterns of the lace company. The workers at Alençon were allowed to make such lace *for their own use*, but all the lace they made for sale was to be disposed of through the company. Such an arrangement was merely an invitation for the workers to make the old-style lace and dispose of it surreptitiously to merchants, who sold it at Paris or elsewhere.

The enforcement of the system was, however, severe. In April, 1669, de Marle was able to write Colbert that the searching of private houses was so thorough that those who wished to sell lace illegally were forced to do so through convents. These religious houses, because their nature and their privileges prevented their being searched, were convenient

<sup>63</sup> Depping, *Correspondance, administrative*, III, 794-96.

centers for such illicit traffic. The company was much disturbed lest this opportunity to dispose of home-made lace reduce the number of workers it could control. It therefore sent an agent to one of the convents, that of the Benedictine nuns in the faubourg of Montsort. This agent, posing as a merchant who wished to buy lace, presented himself at the convent one Saturday evening early in April, 1669. He was escorted thither by a woman named Dubois, who had told him he could secure lace there. He succeeded in buying six handkerchiefs and a lace head-dress for 472 *livres*.

As soon as the agent had thus succeeded in obtaining evidence, the woman Dubois was arrested and brought before the intendant, at eleven o'clock on Saturday night. The culprit readily admitted having taken a handkerchief to the convent for sale, but insisted that the pseudo-merchant had not found it good enough to buy. On Monday de Marle complained to the superiors of the convent. But here he ran into immediate difficulties, for they were ladies named de Nonant, sisters of the comte de Chamilly, who stood high in favor at court. At first the superiors had seemed ready to coöperate with the intendant. But after consulting with the persons involved in the case, they insisted that the whole story was a fabrication. De Marle was in a ticklish position. The affair had made a stir at Alençon, and if he let it drop the lace bureau would certainly find it more difficult to enforce its monopoly. If, on the other hand, he pressed the charge, he ran the risk of causing himself trouble at court. In this quandary he wrote to Colbert and made the suggestion that the nuns at the convent be forced to give back the 472 *livres* and that then the whole matter be forgotten.

De Marle's feeling that the convents were the only remaining centers of the illegal lace trade seems to have been optimistic, for in November, 1669, he wrote Colbert to tell of much more widespread contraventions of the regulations. He explained that girls caught making point-of-Paris lace insisted that they were making it for their own use, and that there was no way of disproving their statements. They then found "means that cannot be discovered of selling it to merchants." Public interest (and probably a desire to prevent the repetition of the earlier riots) demanded that the merchants be allowed to retain their freedom to sell old-style lace not made on the company patterns. But public interest also demanded that the lace bureau be supported in its attempts to get all the lace the workers made. De Marle therefore suggested that the

privileges which permitted merchants to deal in lace, and workers to make lace for their own use, be withdrawn in those places where the lace company had establishments, though he realized that such a step would injure many people. De Marle also declared that the company had become "a bit too exacting as to poorly made lace." If it lowered its standards a little, some of the less highly skilled workers could dispose of their products to it. Such inferior lace could be sold, if not in Paris, certainly at the fairs.<sup>64</sup>

Despite all the early troubles and the continuing difficulties, the making of the new French point took firm root in Alençon. A summary of its development was presented to Colbert in a report by the intendant, Antoine Barillon de Morangis, in 1679. Morangis declared that the introduction of the manufacture of French point had worked great changes in the industry. Before the company established its bureau at Alençon, there had been a great trade in lace. The merchants sent the lace to Paris and their agents sent them a return in cash three times a month. Prices were high, and the merchants made a great deal of money.

The establishment of the company's bureau greatly improved the workmanship and the quality of the lace, but reduced the amount the workers received for it. Under the company's auspices, many of the workers became perfect in the art of lace-making. The end of the company's privilege had led to a certain reduction in standards. Some of the workers had become negligent, and their lace was neither so fine nor so beautiful as the lace had formerly been. If this tendency continued, Morangis feared a renewed danger of competition from abroad. He had explained this threat to the workers and urged them to keep up the quality of the lace.

According to Morangis, there were 10,000 people in the generality of Alençon dependent on lace-making for their livelihood. The trade in it amounted to about 500,000 *livres*. About half the lace made in the generality was produced at Alençon and its vicinity. Argentan made French point to the value of about 60,000 *livres* a year, and Falaise about one-third of that amount.<sup>65</sup>

Though the figures given by Morangis are probably not strictly comparable with the estimate of 8,000 workers advanced by Favier in 1665,

<sup>64</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 365-66; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 796-97.

<sup>65</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 71, report, Morangis to Colbert, July, 1679.

still it seems likely that not only had the quality of the lace been improved through the efforts of the lace company, but also that the number of workers had been increased. But Colbert was never satisfied. In 1682, the year before he died, he was writing to the intendant at Alençon to say that since the girls of that district were thoroughly accustomed to the manufacture of French point lace, it should now be easy to introduce the manufacture of lace in the English and Flemish styles as well. If teachers were needed, Colbert was prepared to help provide them. Morangis was to discuss the project with the leading citizens of the town. He was also to continue to strive to improve the French point, since it was not quite so firm and white as that of Venice.<sup>66</sup>

*Reims.*—The early trouble at Alençon and the ultimate success there both probably arose from the fact that it was already an important lace-making center when the French point company was created. The problems at Reims were different, for though there were some local lace-makers to object, they were by no means so numerous as at Alençon. As Colbert had a special interest in Auxerre because of the nearness of his estate of Seignelay, so he had a peculiar association with Reims, since it was his birthplace, and since he had living there a number of relatives, including an aunt and a sister.

To head the establishment at Reims the company selected a certain Pierre Chardon, a former agent of Mazarin, who had lived so long in Venice that he was sometimes called by an Italian form of his name—Cardoni. Chardon arrived in Reims late in May, 1665. Backed by Colbert's authority, he obtained the aid of the local officials. He secured part of a large house as the central bureau for the new manufacture, and proceeded to install himself there. Though part of the house was occupied at the time, the intendant, André Hoquebert hoped to be able to secure it all for the manufacture eventually. It was large enough to lodge 300 persons, and the rent for all of it was about 400 *livres* a year. To prevent a rapid turnover in his labor supply, Chardon insisted that those who wished to learn the new art must engage themselves to work for the company for six years. In June, 1665, Catherine de Marcq wrote Colbert to thank him for the "favorable reception" he had obtained for the company at Reims. On July 1 Hoquebert reported to Colbert

<sup>66</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 725-26; "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fols. 9-10. It is perhaps worth noting that the chief industry of Alençon is still lace-making.

that the manufacture was then staffed by six Venetian women, twenty-two Flemish, thirty local girls, and seven from Paris.<sup>87</sup>

A letter from Pierre Chardon, written on July 23 to Colbert, describes some of the difficulties encountered in connection with the early days of the establishment. Eleven new Flemish workers had arrived, but it had been impossible to lodge them in the house of the manufacture, because the other tenants refused to vacate it save on a written order from the king. In addition, some men from the other part of the house, despite the protests of Mme Chardon, had forced their way into the work rooms "to see all the girls work." Then four youths had camped in the courtyard for four hours and further annoyed the girls. Chardon suggested that Colbert take such action in the matter as his prudence suggested.<sup>88</sup>

Eventually the troublesome co-tenants of the house got just what they had asked for. In September, 1665, Colbert sent on to Hoquebert royal orders for their removal. This zealous official informed them of the commands, told Chardon of the matter, and offered to have their furniture moved out into the street. One of the tenants departed immediately; the other, after some delay got out likewise.<sup>89</sup>

Meanwhile a new difficulty had arisen in another quarter. Though the inhabitants of Reims were unfriendly to the lace enterprise, they expressed their views not by riots such as those at Alençon, but rather by annoying the inmates of the house of manufacture. In August the students from the colleges and the university began bothering the girl workers by nightly serenades of raucous songs and blaring trumpets.

<sup>87</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 731-35; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 373-75; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 130 bis, fols. 992-93.

<sup>88</sup> I cannot refrain from quoting this letter in the original French as an example of phonetic spelling. It reads: "Il est arrivé dans notre maison onse flamand qui sont toute des mains admirable mais ne les avons pas peu coucher ceux qui sont dans l'autre moitié de la maison on dit autement qu'il n'en sortiroit point a moins quil ne voyent un ordre apsolu du roy en fin. Il nous ont treté de canalie quil trouvoit estrange destre incommode pour des coquinaile. Il y a plus car malgré nous il sont tous entrés par une galerie ont voulu voir travailie toute les fille et quoy que ma femme sy soit oposé nesaumons un homme dentreux na lessé dantrer dans toute les chambre disant quand Mada~ san devoit facher. Je veus voir les file cepandant les autre homme estoit dens ladite galerye entres par forse et voyoit travailie les file. Jay veroulie aussytost ceste port le jour suivant qui estoit faicte [fête?]. 4 jeunes garçons de 18 ens sont entrés par un autre porte et sont resté par force 4 heurs dens les cours qui sont de nostre appartement ce qui fy que toute non file ne purent aller au jardin. Il nous ont fait quantité dautre insulte vostre prudence ordonnera la dessus ce quil sy doit faire." See "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 130 bis, fols. 992-93.

<sup>89</sup> Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, p. 379.



Chardon complained to Pluimers, and this leader in the lace company informed Colbert of the situation. Colbert wrote to Jean Beguin, *lieutenant-général* of the *baillage* and the *présidial*. Beguin immediately responded by issuing, on August 14, a special order to end the annoyances. It forbade "all persons, scholars and others, to roam at night and to stop before and in the neighborhood of the aforesaid house, to make noise there, to sing songs, or to play any sorts of instruments, under penalty of an arbitrary fine and imprisonment." Chardon reported to Beguin that the disturbances had ended, and Beguin passed the good news along to Colbert.<sup>70</sup>

Despite such distractions, the manufacture at Reims progressed somewhat. The number of workers increased from 65 on July 1, 1665, to 120 on August 14, and to 140 in November. But this growth was less than had been anticipated. The inhabitants of Reims were reluctant to enlist in the manufacture, and preferred to continue to make old-style lace at home. Three of the Flemish workers ran away, and Hoquebert had to take quick action in order to capture them and bring them back the next day. The local merchants were unfriendly. All in all, the situation was not too promising.

To remedy it, Colbert, in September, 1665, dispatched to Reims Mlle Du Mont. She was skilled in the art of lace-making and was, moreover, an efficient organizer. There is some evidence that Colbert had employed her, before the founding of the lace company, to create a manufacture of fine lace in Paris. Mlle Du Mont bore with her, letters to Hoquebert from Colbert. Within two weeks of her arrival, Hoquebert, anxious to please the minister, was putting into effect a plan he had thought of. Accompanied by Mlle Du Mont, he made the rounds of the charitable institutions of Reims and selected some 20 recruits for the lace manufacture from among the orphans and other dependents. On October 10 he was able to report that these additions, together with 4 girls from bourgeois families, had brought the total of workers of local origin up to 120. He suggested hopefully that each year a new batch of girls might be secured from the charitable institutions.<sup>71</sup>

As at Auxerre, Colbert sought to strengthen the manufacture at

<sup>70</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 733-34; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 378-79, 404; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 367-68, doc. 178; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fol. 597. Bondonis gives the date of this order incorrectly in his text (p. 378), but has it right in his appendix (p. 404). Boissonnade cites the wrong folio of the right document for this order.

<sup>71</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fol. 597; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 733-34; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 404, 379-80, 371-74.

Reims by enlisting the services of his relatives. The three whom he employed in this manner were his sister Claire, the abbess of the convent of Sainte-Claire; his aunt, Marguerite Mesvilliers-Colbert; and his cousin, Marie Chertemps-Colbert. In October, 1665, Marie visited the establishment. She reported that the Reims girls were "docile" and learned quickly. She would strive, she declared, to increase the number of workers. In January, 1666, Colbert wrote to thank his cousin and his aunt for their efforts and to urge them "to continue to keep an eye" on the lace establishment.

Somewhat earlier Mlle Du Mont had been replaced by Mme de Fille-sac-Dotte, another lady skilled in lace-making, who had been teaching the art at Alençon. That she gave satisfaction to Colbert is indicated by the fact that she remained, save for short intervals, at the bureau at Reims till the company lost its privilege, and that in the intervening years she received at least three times (1668, 1671, 1673) grants of money, to the extent of 600 *livres* each time, from royal funds.<sup>72</sup>

By the end of 1666 Caumartin, intendant of Champagne, was writing to Colbert of the "beautiful products" of the establishment at Reims, and declaring his admiration for Colbert's efforts in founding such manufactures. But a mysterious affliction overtook the establishment in the next year. In November Marie wrote to her cousin, the minister:

There has been a misfortune in the last three or four months at the house of the manufacture of Reims. A number of girls were attacked by an illness which the doctors did not know, and which Messieurs the Grand Vicar and the priests, whom I had the honor to see at that time, assured me must be witchcraft; and after having done everything imaginable to restore them, there still remain 3 or 4 girls of Reims who are very ill, which causes a cooling off in this city for putting girls in the establishment; after the house was blessed, thanks to God, no more of them fell into this misfortune; they are still there to the number of 140 girls, of whom most are good workers.

Marie closed her letter by suggesting that the time was ripe for the distribution of some prizes in money to the best workers, to encourage those who remained and to attract new recruits.<sup>73</sup>

Colbert seems to have approved of the idea, for a little later his cousin wrote him again and sent him a list of the workers who deserved

<sup>72</sup> Bondoio, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 381-82; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 286, 558, 707. (Just as another example supporting my belief that the most careful scholar cannot avoid errors, Bondoio gives this last citation (p. 382, note 82) as 286, 558, 787, the last figure being incorrect.)

<sup>73</sup> Bondoio, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 382-84, 386; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fol. 25.

rewards. She had divided them into 3 classes, the first of which was to receive 20 *livres*, the second 12 *livres*, and the third 6 *livres*. She estimated that the total cost would be about 800 *livres*, which was the sum Colbert had given in the previous year for the same purpose. Her mathematics were not of the best, for the lists showed 28 in the first class, 24 in the second, and 36 in the third. To give each of them the suggested prices would have cost 1,064 *livres*. It is interesting to note that of the 88 girls on the list, 7 were referred to as *Mademoiselle* and one as *Madame*, appellations that would indicate bourgeois origin at least. That Colbert had been complaining about the small number of girls employed at the lace manufacture seems clear, for Marie closed her letter by remarking, "In regard to the number of girls that you hope for, the house can hold only 300, to which point we are going to work incessantly to fill the place."<sup>74</sup>

At about this time a certain M. Mignot, who was probably a native of the district, was put in charge of those aspects of the manufacture which were not presided over by Mme de Fillesac-Dotte. He seems to have been interested in providing suitably for the girl workers, for in the fall of 1667 a report reached Colbert that they were being fed too well. He wrote to his aunt, Mme Mesvilliers-Colbert, to question her on the matter. She replied with some heat that the girls were allowed only 11 ounces of raw meat each per day, which when cooked was reduced to about 8 ounces. She added some illuminating details on the status of the workers. There were 145 of them, she said. Of these, 24 Flemish women or girls were paid salaries. Fifty girls were given their board, food and clothes. Thirty others were given some remuneration at the end of the year, apparently in addition to board and lodging. The rest worked for their board alone. But in addition each girl received 6 *sous* or 8 *sous* a week, according to her skill and industry.<sup>75</sup>

One difference between the establishment at Auxerre and that at Reims seems to have been that while most of the workers in the former lived at home and came by day to the house of manufacture, most of the girls in the latter lived in the lace-house and were subjected to a discipline not unlike that of a convent. Some details of their life may be garnered from a letter of Mme de Fillesac-Dotte to Colbert of December 6, 1667. She reported that everything was "in very good order both

<sup>74</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 102-3; Bondoiois, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 384, 405-6.

<sup>75</sup> Bondoiois, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 385-86.

for the spiritual and the temporal." The daily routine of the establishment, as she outlined it, gave the girls but little leisure. They rose early, heard mass at six, worked until breakfast at eight and again till noon, when they dined. From dinner till one-thirty they were free, save that those who could not read and write were given lessons by a teacher. From one-thirty till eight in the evening they worked again. At eight they had supper and then went "to the chapel to give thanks to God for their food." Though Colbert's informant does not say so, the girls probably had to go to bed at ten o'clock or earlier. She did, however, assure Colbert that everything was well regulated, that there was nothing superfluous, and that the girls worked "very assiduously and passably well."<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps the discipline was a little too severe. At any rate, great difficulty was experienced in securing new workers. During the fall of 1668 and the ensuing winter a catastrophe befell the manufacture. Like the quarter of Reims in which it was situated, it was ravaged by small-pox. The town authorities thought to prevent any interruption to trade by forbidding people to talk about the disease. But the epidemic greatly added to the worries of Mme de Fillesac-Dotte. That the entrepreneurs of the lace company were not satisfied with the quantity of lace produced at Reims, though there seems to have been a consensus of opinion that it was of very fine quality, is indicated by the fact that they offered to turn over the establishment to its directress.

During the height of the epidemic the girls seem to have been sent to their homes, but told to keep on working. In February, 1669, Mme de Fillesac-Dotte was discussing the possibility of bringing them back. At the same time she was considering a plan whereby any girl who wished to learn would be taught lace-making, without undertaking to live and work at the house of manufacture for any specified time. But the entrepreneurs had other ideas, for in an effort to decrease their expenses, they decided shortly thereafter to receive new apprentice-workers at Reims only if the parents of the girls paid 110 *livres* toward their board and lodging. Mme Mesvilliers-Colbert wrote to her nephew in April, 1669, to denounce this scheme. It would prevent the recruiting of new workers, she insisted. It was an impossible sum for poor parents. Twelve girls had been refused already because they lacked money. There were only sixty girls left. It seemed almost as if the entre-

<sup>76</sup> Bondoï, *Reims et Sedan*, p. 387.

preneurs were trying to ruin the establishment, she declared, especially since they were no longer sending proper materials to be made up into lace.<sup>77</sup>

Colbert replied to his aunt, upholding the entrepreneurs. She bowed to his wishes, but got in the last word by remarking, "But I say in passing that the members of the company [*les aintaïresses*, she called them] wish to make too much money." The new policies of the entrepreneurs brought also something of a breach between them and Mme de Fillesac-Dotte. Colbert ordered them to reach an understanding with her, but this was apparently not to the liking of at least one member of the company, M. de Bie. All in all, the position of the lace establishment at Reims was not an assured one after 1669. Mme de Fillesac-Dotte kept on striving to build it up. But Colbert himself seems to have lost interest in it. In the last letters of the directress that have come to light, she was complaining fruitlessly to the minister, in 1672 and 1673, that the company was impairing its own success by charging too high prices, and was ruining the manufacture at Reims by failing to send it the necessary materials.<sup>78</sup>

*Sens, Aurillac, and Montargis.*—In other places the great lace project of Colbert and the company met with varying success and varied difficulties. In general, the three places already discussed, Auxerre, Alençon, and Reims, may stand as types. But at Sens, a town which Colbert had held up to the officials of Auxerre as an example when he was chiding them in 1670, the lace establishment was more prosperous than in many other towns. In 1668 the manufacture there was regulated by an elaborate decree. At the request of the *maire* and *échevins* of the town, Colbert had sent thither the sieur Le Camus to investigate the situation, in regard to the possibility of establishing there the manufacture of lace and of wool stockings. Le Camus had consulted with the officials, and an assembly of the chief inhabitants had agreed in August that the product of certain local wine duties be used to found and support such industries.

The directors of the lace and wool-stockings companies had asked that a royal regulation be issued, and Le Camus had made a report on September 12, 1668. As a result, a decree of the Council of State was forthcoming on September 27, along the lines suggested by Le Camus. It provided that all persons working for or wishing to work for the lace

<sup>77</sup> Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 388-91,

<sup>78</sup> Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 391-93.

establishment were to be registered. They were then to be provided with patterns and materials. After a suitable time they were to bring the finished lace back to the bureau, where it was to be registered, and the workers paid. Each year 100 *livres* was to be distributed in prizes, 40 *livres* to the best worker, 20 *livres* to the next best, and 10 *livres* to the next 4. These sums were to be provided by Colbert from royal funds.

Registered workers were forbidden to lend or to give patterns to anyone else. Nor were they to keep them more than a reasonable time, except in case of illness. No unregistered worker was to make any lace in her home or anywhere else. Nor should a registered worker make lace except for the lace bureau. Parents with three children in the lace manufacture were to be exempt from the lodging of soldiers. Agents of the company were to have the right to search private dwellings, to prevent contravention of the regulations. Private merchants were forbidden to sell lace patterns or lace made according to the patterns of the manufacture. All cases arising under the decree were to go before the *juge prévost* of Sens.<sup>79</sup>

The system outlined by the decree seems to have worked fairly well, for in April, 1669, Amonnet, a member of the lace company on a tour of inspection of the various establishments, wrote to Colbert that at Sens there were 150 girls and women making French point for the bureau, and that more were expected to start work soon. Nor was this expectation vain, for in June Le Camus reported that the number of workers had risen to 300. By 1670 Colbert was lavishing praise on Sens for its coöperation in making a success of the lace industry. Nor were these auspicious beginnings belied by later results, for on June 23, 1682, the intendant, de Menars, wrote to Colbert thus:<sup>80</sup>

A very large number of the girls of the city are working on French point lace, by which they earn enough so that they are not a burden on their parents; this manufacture has been of considerable benefit in this city, because it has withdrawn the greater part of these girls from idleness and vice.

At Aurillac also, the new French point industry met with considerable success, although, as at Alençon, it had to compete with the old established manufacture of coarser lace. Shortly after the formation of the lace company, arrangements were made to send Venetian women to

<sup>79</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, fols. 419-21.

<sup>80</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 819; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 541-42; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 425, letter from de Menars to Colbert, June 23, 1681.

Aurillac to teach the art of making fine lace. They arrived there early in July, 1665, and were greeted coldly by the town authorities, who asked whether they came by royal order, and questioned them as to whether they did not intend to put an end to all the manufactures of Aurillac. Women shouted at the Venetian teachers in the street, crying out that Aurillac made better lace than Venice. Despite this unsatisfactory commencement, affairs were managed somewhat better than at Alençon, and the local women were placated by permission to continue to make their old coarse lace. In April, 1666, the intendant, de Fortia, reported to Colbert that all the best workers had been employed by the company and that the number making lace for it had risen to 1,800.<sup>81</sup>

All might have gone well, if the very success of the establishment had not aroused the opposition of the merchants, who saw their traffic in lace threatened. Some of the disgruntled merchants came from Bordeaux, others were Parisians with agents at Aurillac. But the chief firebrand was a merchant of Aurillac named Courtez. He had opposed the establishment from the start, but his opposition was transformed into fury and hate when some of his lace was confiscated as illegal, and one of his agents was imprisoned. He went among the lace-makers of Aurillac and got them to send him as their deputy to the king and his Council, to plead in their behalf.

From Paris Courtez wrote back to his supporters that he would get the royal declaration founding the lace company annulled, together with the various decrees of the Council of State and the ordinances of the intendant; that the privilege of the company had been secured illegally; that the entrepreneurs were bribing the intendants; and that he, Courtez, had secured the support of many powerful nobles and many merchants of Paris. Such reports had their effect in Aurillac. Workers ceased to go to the bureau. Merchants openly threatened that they would not give work to those who continued in the employment of the company. Two merchants, named Rey and Collines, who had coöperated with the company, had the windows of their houses broken. Threats were made to burn the lace bureau. The agent of Courtez was removed from prison, and the goods seized from Courtez were recaptured by force and deposited with a notary.

Such doings were, of course, not to be permitted, so on July 5, 1666,

<sup>81</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 735-37.

a decree of the Council of State was issued. It ordered de Fortia, intendant in Auvergne, to prosecute Courtez, his accomplices, and supporters, and to enforce all declarations, decrees, and ordinances pertaining to the lace manufacture. Courtez and all others were forbidden to do or to say anything against the entrepreneurs, Pluimers or de Marcq, or their agents, whom the king specifically placed under his protection. The inhabitants of Aurillac were forbidden to interfere with the lace bureau, to make any lace except for it, and to sell any lace save to it.<sup>82</sup>

This decree did not end the troubles, for a year later a new disturbance occurred at Aurillac. François Collines, Louis du Mont, and Jean Quin, who seem to have been bourgeois of the town who were coöperating with the lace bureau, had started to search for illegal lace, which they had learned was being made in the faubourgs. With an archer to support them, they had been about to enter the house of a certain Widow Capel, when a group of merchants from Bordeaux, including one named La Fitte, came upon the scene. The new arrivals, by violence, prevented the making of any search and heaped "insults and threats" upon the would-be searchers. The commotion "caused a quantity of people to assemble," and this created an opportunity to spirit away "a valise which was full of forbidden lace." As the searching party withdrew, their opponents accompanied them with "a number of cries tending toward sedition." Collines and his associates drew up a report dated July 4, 1667, and gave it to the intendant so that he might enforce the decrees and regulations and punish the Bordeaux merchants. To protect themselves, the merchants of Bordeaux appeared before one of the local judicial officials, and brought in people who had witnessed the event, to testify in their behalf. By this means they secured a decision against the agents of the lace establishment.

De Fortia, the intendant, then summoned the offending merchants to appear before him, but La Fitte appealed to the *Parlement* of Paris and secured another decision adverse to the lace company. Further to delay any criminal action against him, La Fitte secured a decree ordering Collines and Quin to appear before the royal Council, so that it might decide between de Fortia and the *Parlement* of Paris. Some weeks later, by a decree of October 20, 1667, the Council of State cut through these legalistic entanglements. The decree declared that all cases having to do with the lace manufacture should go before the in-

<sup>82</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 131-32.



tendants, and should come before the Council of State only on appeal. It provided that Collines, Quin, and Du Mont should not have to appear before the royal Council. The whole case, in all its aspects, was to be thrashed out before de Fortia. La Fitte and his associates were forbidden to try to bring it before any other court. Thus the cases involving lace were brought before the intendants, who were subservient to Colbert, who was bent on supporting the lace company. In this instance it quite probably went hard with La Fitte and his supporters.<sup>83</sup>

Thus upheld by the royal government, the lace bureau at Aurillac continued to operate. In June, 1669, Amonnet reported that the manufacture in Aurillac was being greatly impaired by the attitude of the local officials, who thwarted all the efforts of the company. But a month later de Fortia wrote Colbert that the manufacture of French point at Aurillac could not be succeeding better. The one at Riom was, he declared, getting along all right, and a new one was about to be founded at Saint-Flour. In the long run, though lace-making continued to flourish at Aurillac, the manufacture of French point did not take deep root there.<sup>84</sup>

At Montargis the decline came even more rapidly than at Aurillac. The bureau for French point seems to have been founded there in 1665 or 1666. At some period shortly thereafter it could boast about 150 workers. But an unsigned *mémoire* sent to Colbert, probably at the end of 1668, explained that the number of workers had quickly been reduced to a maximum of 80. The chief difficulty seems to have been that the girls who were learning to make lace were given no remuneration whatever. Hence the parents of a girl lost her services in the home and got no return for their sacrifice. The *mémoire* suggested that a sum of money be raised by local taxes or tolls and used to pay the apprentice lace-makers. No such step seems to have been taken, and Amonnet, in April, 1669, noted the lack of progress made at the establishment there. Colbert himself remarked on the lack of success of the bureau at Montargis in November, 1670, and attributed it to the failure of the *maire* and *échevins* properly to coöperate. But he still hoped that something could be done if the company sent an agent there to direct the work, and if the town set aside a fund to reward assiduous workers. His

<sup>83</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 133-35.

<sup>84</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 737, 819; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, p. 369, note 10.

hopes, however, seem to have been belied, and the establishment sank into nothingness without leaving a trace behind it.<sup>85</sup>

*Sedan, Bourges, Poitiers, and Angers.*—At Sedan great difficulties arose to harass the French point establishment. The real cause of trouble at Sedan, as at Alençon and Aurillac, was the existence, before the creation of a new company, of a flourishing local lace industry. The lace made there was called Sedan point, and it was held to be very fine because of the high grade of thread employed. Furthermore, there were 130 or more masters, mistresses, and merchants of Sedan, who seem not only to have made lace themselves but to have had a good deal made for them under the putting-out system, both in Sedan and in the surrounding district. Another difficulty lay in the officials who became involved in the attempt to bring the lace industry of Sedan under the control of the company. The governor of the city, the comte de La Bourlie, was not a particularly able person and he was involved in a dispute with Joseph de la Menardière, the *président-lieutenant-général* of the local *présidial* court.

On November 6, 1666, Louis XIV sent to La Bourlie a letter which may quite possibly have been drawn up by Colbert. It read:

The establishment of the manufacture of French point is of such great consequence for the welfare of my people, and I am obliged to take such great precautions against the malice of the merchants who have been accustomed to have work done at Venice and to sell at my court and in my kingdom the products of that city, that I wish you would not only see to it that this manufacture is established in the city of Sedan and the neighboring villages, but also that you would prevent the sale of the products of the manufacture of Sedan to others than the entrepreneurs of the establishment of French point, so that all the merchants, being excluded from every sort of trade in that city and the surrounding district, will lose hope of being able to counterfeit these products and will be forced to attach themselves in good faith to that manufacture. Rest assured that you can do nothing that will be more pleasing to me than to see punctually that my intentions in this respect are carried out.<sup>86</sup>

It was, however, La Menardière who was most active in bringing together the company and the local lace masters. During November, and before La Bourlie received the royal letter, La Menardière superintended

<sup>85</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 149, fols. 547-49; Bondonis, "Colbert et l'industrie de la dentelle, la manufacture de Montargis," pp. 227-41; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 584.

<sup>86</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 438-39; Bondonis, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 393-95.

the negotiation of an agreement between an agent of the entrepreneurs of the lace company and the master lace-makers of the city. By it the lace-makers of Sedan bound themselves to work only for the company and only on its patterns. The company was to deal with the lace workers of the surrounding district only through the masters and mistresses of lace-making at Sedan. The company was to employ all the lace-makers of Sedan who wished to work for it. It was to pay for the lace, prices to be set by an arbitration committee, nominated by the masters and mistresses on the one hand and by the company on the other. If the committee could not reach an agreement on the prices, one of the local judges was to be called in to settle the dispute.

The agreement had much to recommend it. On November 27 La Menardière wrote Colbert, enclosing a copy of the compact, which, he said, he had secured only after "much fuss." He assured the minister that this "union" would be "advantageous to the plan of this establishment." Under it, he felt certain, Sedan alone would have as many lace-workers as had all the rest of France. La Bourlie wrote to Colbert, on December 6, 1666, indicating that the agreement met with his approval also.

Despite the atmosphere of approbation which surrounded the conclusion of the agreement, trouble arose almost immediately. On December 14 La Menardière sent to Colbert a letter in which he took the side of the lace-makers and accused the company of trying to violate all the terms of the agreement, save that which gave it control of the entire lace production of Sedan. According to him, the company was employing only such persons as it saw fit, and was paying prices set by itself at one-third less than the usual prices paid. Under such conditions, he felt that the lace-makers of Sedan would leave the country or turn to other trades. Another complaint made to Colbert by the lace-workers of Sedan in the same month was that the company was trying to deal direct with workers in the near-by towns and villages, instead of using the masters and mistresses of Sedan as intermediaries. This, they felt, bade fair to ruin the business of Sedan.

The entrepreneurs, on their part, accused La Menardière of "retarding" the establishment of the manufacture at Sedan. Pluimers and Paul de Marcq wrote Colbert to this effect and asked him to force this official to coöperate with them as La Bourlie and Jacquesson, *lieutenant-particulier* of the city, were doing. They sought to excuse themselves for

not fulfilling the terms of the agreement by alleging that their agent had gone beyond his authority in signing it. They had sent him to Sedan, they declared, only to rent a house for the manufacture and to give work to all who presented themselves, paying them 50 percent more than the current prices. As to the agreement itself, they insisted that its conditions were impossible. By it the masters and mistresses of Sedan sought to subject to themselves all the workers of the surrounding area, whereas these workers would prefer to deal directly with the company. The provisions for arbitration of prices would merely lead the workers to make arguments instead of lace. The entrepreneurs, therefore, asked Colbert for the right to employ workers in Sedan and the neighboring towns and villages. They would, they assured him, pay one-half more than the prices current for the last two months.<sup>87</sup>

The next three years seem to have been devoted to a struggle along the lines already developed. The lace-makers of Sedan sent delegates to the king to explain their position. La Menardière aided them and arranged to assess all those in the industry, to pay the expenses of the expedition. La Bourlie, siding with the company still, sought to interfere with the collection of these sums. The entanglements grew and the dispute went on and on. The company was discouraged and its establishment at Sedan was "almost abandoned." Colbert seems to have been so impressed with the difficulties of the situation that he did not attempt to solve the problem by giving the company any sort of exclusive control over all lace-making in the city. In January, 1669, the entrepreneurs consulted with Jacquesson as to the possibility of building up their establishment. But in the summer of the same year La Menardière scored a point for the local lace-makers, when, after an interview with Colbert, he secured from the minister permission to give control of the putting out of lace-work in the Ardennes region to the merchants of Sedan. The company may have maintained its bureau at Sedan till about 1674. But it never got control of the lace industry there. On the other hand, the patterns and techniques of the company modified the style of lace made at Sedan, and the lace manufactured there, down into the eighteenth century, seems to have shown the influence of the work of Colbert's company.<sup>88</sup>

At Bourges the lace company seemed at first to have very rosy pros-

<sup>87</sup> Bondoïs, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 395-98, 406-7; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 338, doc. 89.

<sup>88</sup> Bondoïs, *Reims et Sedan*, pp. 399-402.

pects. It wrote to the town officials to inquire how many girls there were, suitable for the work. The *maire* replied that there were some 300 available, and he promised, furthermore, to provide a house for the company. In 1666, therefore, the company sent to Bourges 14 teachers, who in the next 3 years taught not 300 but 900 girls how to make lace. As in other places, there arose difficulties, because the women had been wont to make coarse lace called point of Paris, but the authorities of Bourges seem to have made real efforts to support the monopoly of the company. On November 11, 1667, the *maire* and *échevins* issued a declaration which summoned before them all merchants selling lace other than French point secured from the company, and all girls who, having been employed by the company, had left it to work for other persons. The declaration directed agents of the company and of the town to search shops and houses for illegal lace, which was to be confiscated whenever found. Girls who could make lace were to work for the bureau of the company, "where they have learned all they know." Ladies of the town were urged to lend dignity to the bureau by gracing it with their presence.

Two days later the *maire* and *échevins* sent Colbert a copy of their declaration. If it was not sufficiently stringent, they felt that a new decree of the Council of State would be necessary to empower them to go further. They expressed the hope that the number of workers at the lace establishment would soon increase. Their orders were not, however, very well enforced, for in April, 1669, Amonnet reported that though 900 girls had learned to make lace at Bourges, only 140 were working for the company. The rest had been lured away to work for private persons. Nor was even this moderate success permanent. For within 3 years after the dissolution of the company, the manufacture of French point seems to have ceased entirely at Bourges.<sup>80</sup>

At Poitiers, when the lace company wrote in 1667 to ask that a house be assigned it, the town authorities welcomed its overtures. They agreed to find it a house, and to register girls who wished to learn to make lace. The *maire* wrote to the entrepreneurs, "We wish to assist this manufacture as much as we can." But as Colbert said, Poitiers was famous for its idleness, and the establishment does not seem to have made much headway. At Issoudun, on the other hand, Amonnet could

<sup>80</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 173, 171; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 819. Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 249.

report in April, 1669, that there were 350 girls at work and that the regulations were being fairly well observed.<sup>90</sup>

In Angers the lace company met with a very cold reception. The entrepreneurs pointed out to the *maire* and *échevins* what benefits would accrue to the town from the establishment of a lace manufacture there, asked that a suitable house be given them, and offered to teach girls lace-making free of charge. Unimpressed, the city fathers replied that the town was too poor to supply the company with a house. Nothing daunted, the entrepreneurs began an investigation on their own account and located a large building, in which 400 or even 500 persons might have been lodged. It was called the *College de Bueil*, but it was occupied only by a "principal" and 4 or 5 fellows. The entrepreneurs then appealed to the king.

In response to their request, a decree of the Council of State turned the building over to the lace company, as the only one in Angers proper for their establishment. The principal and fellows were to vacate the premises. But the company was to provide them with a suitable lodging near the *College de l'Oratoire*, where they could carry on their studies. The revenues of the *College de Bueil* were to be retained by its evicted inmates. The intendant at Tours was to see to the enforcement of the decree. Despite such support from the government, the company was unable to make a success of its establishment at Angers.<sup>91</sup>

*Summary.*—So the story of the lace company's activities went. In some places it met with moderate success, in others with flat failure. At Alençon, or Sens, or Loudun, it could record some real measure of accomplishment. At Montargis, or Château-Thierry, or Angers, its efforts quickly came to naught. In summary, it can be said that at the height of its career, about 1669 or 1670, the company was employing some thousands of workers divided among a number of establishments. It was paying large dividends to its stockholders. It was ousting Venetian lace from the French market. But even at that time, its efforts had proved abortive in a number of localities, and nowhere had it attained the importance which Colbert had expected of it.

After the dissolution of the company, French point continued to be manufactured in a number of places. But in the eighteenth century

<sup>90</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 296, doc. 11; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 209; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 819.

<sup>91</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 135-37.

French point, as such, ceased to be made, though reminiscences of it were retained in the lace of certain towns such as Alençon. That the company performed a notable service in teaching the art of lace-making is clear, and some of the effects of this instruction seem to have been of permanent importance. That its policies were to a degree unwise is also clear, but given the time, the places, and the obstinate opposition, it is not certain that other policies would have succeeded better. Colbert has been blamed for trying to supersede beautiful local styles of lace by an imitation of Venetian point. But he seems to have done so because he was convinced that it was a finer and a more salable product. It is worth noting that at Alençon, despite vigorous opposition, the populace was forced to turn to the making of French point, and that at Alençon the populace still earns its living by making a lace derived in part at least from the French point style.

It should be noted, too, that Colbert, though he may have been unwise in creating a monopolistic company, attuned its exclusive privileges to differing circumstances. In some places its monopoly was never enforced. In others it was partially enforced. In still others it was rigorously enforced. At the start, the original declaration shows that Colbert intended to permit the manufacture of old-style lace in all places where it was established. He was driven to give the company monopolistic rights only by the opposition which it encountered. To designate Colbert's effort to give France a flourishing lace industry within a brief time, either a success or a failure, would be wrong. It was probably a partial failure, modified by some elements of real success. But success or failure, it was a magnificent attempt.<sup>92</sup>

## 2. TAPESTRIES, RUGS, AND THE ART CRAFTS

In encouraging the manufacture of lace and wool stockings, Colbert resorted to the establishment of great companies which, though centered at Paris, had subsidiary establishments in dozens of towns. In his efforts to build up the manufacture of tapestries and rugs, he employed quite different and quite varied devices. The establishments at the Gobelins and the Savonnerie, which had come down from an earlier

<sup>92</sup> It is interesting that the English called the French point colbertine, or colberteen. The word was in common use from the latter part of the seventeenth century (it is to be found in Congreve's plays) well on into the eighteenth century (Swift employed it too). But gradually it seems to have come to be applied to cheap, coarse, French lace, instead of the fine lace of Colbert's time.

period, he turned into state establishments. The tapestry works at Beauvais were left in the hands of a private entrepreneur, supported and guided by the government. At Aubusson a number of tapestry-makers were formed into a collective *manufacture royale*.

*The Gobelins.*—The Gobelins under Colbert became the most important tapestry manufacture in France. But it was far more than that, for it came to be also a center for the production of all sorts of luxury goods which depended upon the application of art to craftsmanship. Colbert spent hundreds of thousands of *livres* directly to support the Gobelins, the Savonnerie, and the factory at Beauvais; he spent millions of *livres* on the products they turned out. Though he was economical in many respects, he lavished the money of the government to secure the objects which might make the court of Louis XIV and the dwellings of the king the most beautiful, the most brilliant, the most glorious, that the world had ever seen.<sup>93</sup>

In 1662 and 1663 Colbert was already busy reforming the old tapestry works at the Gobelins. The "*peintre du roi*," Le Brun, who had had some training in the matter of tapestries under Fouquet, was put in charge of the establishment. In 1664 the importation of all foreign tapestries was forbidden, to aid the tapestry-makers of France. But Colbert, as Superintendent of Buildings, was allowed by license to permit each year the importation of 200 tapestries costing from 1,000 to 1,200 *livres* each, and 25 costing more than 1,200 *livres*. This special provision was an old one. It was retained, probably, because it was felt that the king might want some foreign tapestries; possibly because it would prove profitable to Colbert. Meanwhile, Colbert had bought for the crown the house in which the Gobelins was established, and adjacent ones as well. He was gathering there skilled workers—painters, sculptors, goldsmiths, cabinetmakers, and especially tapestry-makers. Many of these last were Flemish, so many that in 1693 a Flemish priest was still being paid 100 *livres* a year to preach to his compatriots who had been brought to the Gobelins by Colbert.<sup>94</sup>

The making over of the Gobelins was consummated in an edict of November, 1667. The edict explained that Louis XIV, anxious to follow the tradition established by Henry IV, was seeking to make the

<sup>93</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, *passim*.

<sup>94</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II, 62–63; AD XI, No. 42, *liasse* 3, decree of April 24, 1664; O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2040A, *liasse* 5, doc. on Gobelins; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 242.



kingdom prosperous by encouraging manufactures. He had already bought the Gobelins and installed there numerous artists and craftsmen, whose products surpassed in beauty those which could be purchased abroad. But to give this establishment "a constant and perpetual form," to strengthen it, and to provide it with proper regulations were tasks that yet remained to be done.

The edict, therefore, in seventeen articles laid down rules and regulations for the Gobelins. It provided that on a marble plaque over its chief door were to be placed the royal arms and the inscription *Manufacture royale des meubles de la couronne*. The whole establishment was to be under the administration of Colbert and his successors in the office of Superintendent of Buildings. The Gobelins was to be kept full of "good painters, master makers of high warp tapestries, goldsmiths, founders, engravers, lapidaries, makers of furniture in ebony and in wood, dyers, and other good workers." These workers were to be paid pensions by Colbert. In addition, 60 apprentices chosen by him were to be maintained at the Gobelins and supported by the king to the extent of 250 *livres* a year for each. After 6 years as apprentices and 4 more years of service in the establishment, they were to be deemed full masters, with the right to practice their arts anywhere in France. Other workmen who served for 6 years at the Gobelins were likewise to attain the status of masters. Foreigners who worked there for 10 years were to receive naturalization without further formalities. The buildings of the establishment and twelve near-by houses were to be free from the lodging of soldiers. Workers there were to be exempt from watch and ward and all other duties and taxes. A brewery free of all taxation might be set up to provide beer for the Gobelins. Lawsuits involving the personnel were to be heard by the *mâtres des requêtes*, and on appeal by the *Parlement* of Paris. The importation and sale of foreign tapestries was forbidden without exception.<sup>95</sup>

Charles Le Brun, who had been appointed director of the Gobelins on March 8, 1663, was confirmed in this post by the third article of this edict. He remained its director until his death in 1690. His position was not a sinecure; far from it, for upon him devolved the duty of providing designs for the work done in the establishment. In the Louvre are preserved 2,082 sketches, designs, and models by Le Brun for tap-

<sup>95</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 14,115, fol. 305; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 304-6, doc. 20.

estries, sculpture, candelabras, vases, locks, jewelry, and so forth. In addition, he superintended the making of other designs, saw to the maintenance of discipline, directed the training of apprentices or taught them himself, watched over the whole establishment, and carried out the plans for it that were developed by Colbert. Few artists have ever been in a position, during nearly three decades, through which they could so impress their ideas on the whole field of applied art. Le Brun received some 12,000 *livres* a year for his work at the Gobelins, but he earned every *denier* of it. It was he more than any other man who set the tone for the *décor* of the *grand siècle*.

The most important persons working under Le Brun at the Gobelins were the master-makers of high-warp tapestries. They were regarded with so much respect that they were usually referred to as *sieur* or *Monsieur*, for they were artists as well as craftsmen. Their workrooms were the center of the Gobelins. Of these masters the most famous were Jean Lefevre, a native of Flanders who had come to France in 1647, and the two Jans. There were also master-makers of the less costly low-warp tapestries, like Mozin and La Croix. The dyeing of worsted, thread, and textiles was in the hands of Josse Van den Kerchove, a craftsman of great skill.

These workers all received salaries from the king, ranging from 200 or 300 *livres* up to 1,500 *livres* or more. This was merely a sort of retaining fee or special honorarium, since all work was paid for on a somewhat different basis. In a sense, the Gobelins was a collection of individual masters, rather than a unified establishment. The government sold each master the silks, wool, gold, silver, and so forth, that were needed for a tapestry, and it provided the paintings of which the tapestries were to be woven copies. Then it contracted with the master for the finished tapestry, agreeing to pay him so much per square ell. For high-warp tapestries the price varied from 225 *livres* or less per square ell to 500 *livres* or more, according to the type of material and the work. If much gold thread was used, for example, the price was higher. Faces cost about three times as much to do as landscapes, and about twice as much as flowers. The prices for low-warp tapestries were about half as much as those for high-warp ones. They ranged from 120 *livres* or less to 250 *livres* or more per square ell. In 1680 Colbert changed the unit of tapestry from the square ell to the *baton*, which was one-sixteenth as much, but the general system he left unaltered.

From the sum he received for the tapestry, the master paid for the work done on it. He might do some of it himself, or apprentices might do it under his guidance. Or again he might hire workers to do it, paying them so much for each *baton* they wove. The price paid for the tapestry was calculated under three heads: the cost of materials, the cost of the work or labor, and a fee to the master for his direction of the weaving. The value of this last item was high—some 130 *livres* per square ell.<sup>96</sup>

The same system seems to have been used for other kinds of work. The lapidaries, for example, were paid so much for each square foot they did. Thus it was that the orders from the king for goods were the lifeblood of the Gobelins. The masters might make things for private persons, but their chief source of income was from working on objects to be used in the royal palaces and châteaux or to be given away by the king as presents. When war cut down the royal expenditures, the Gobelins suffered. But in this respect the Dutch war was by no means as serious as the War of the League of Augsburg, during which the master tapestry-makers complained that the cessation of orders had reduced them to poverty.

Though the Gobelins was in a sense a collection of masters working independently, it was also to a great degree a unified institution. The king paid the wages of a variety of officers for it. A concierge-treasurer-store-keeper got 1,200 *livres* a year. A porter (who was a woman at one period) received 300 *livres*. A gardener was given 400 *livres*, and a surgeon was paid the same amount. A chaplain and a confessor received smaller sums. The wages or pensions paid to such persons and to a score or more of the masters ran up to 15,000 or 25,000 *livres* a year. In 1675, exclusive of the sums paid for goods, the Gobelins cost the government over 140,000 *livres*.<sup>97</sup>

Though the Gobelins is usually thought of as a tapestry manufacture, though that was indeed its central function, and though that is the aspect of its work that has been perpetuated to the present day, still the masters of other arts played an important rôle there in the time of Colbert. There were about ten painters, who under the direction of Le Brun

<sup>96</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 14,115, fols. 7 ff., 13 ff.; O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2040<sup>A</sup>, *liasse* 3, *mémoire* of March 15, 1688; *liasse* 6, *mémoire* of 1694; *liasse* 1, *passim*; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 62–66; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 242–43; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, *passim*.

<sup>97</sup> O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2040<sup>A</sup>, *liasse* 6, *mémoire*; *liasse* 2, *passim*; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 62–66; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, *passim*.

made designs for tapestries, taught apprentices, and did other work. Monnayer painted flowers; Boël, flowers and animals; Géoël, landscapes; Niciasus, animals; Baptiste, flowers; Francart, ornamental work. They received 100 to 300 *livres* a year from the king. Two painters, Loir and Van der Meulen, were on a somewhat different plane. Each had a salary of 6,000 *livres* a year, and received handsome sums besides for doing special orders. Aside from the master painters, there were some scores of others who worked for Le Brun, assisting him in his various tasks.

There were, too, a number of master designers and engravers, Audran, Rousselet, Le Clerc, Le Pautre, Edelinck, Baudet. There were sculptors in wood, chasers, and metal founders, like Caffieri, Temporiti, Coysevoix, and Tubi. There were furniture and cabinetmakers, like Golle, Sommer, and Poitou; goldsmiths, like Villiers and his sons, or Alexis Loir; workers in fine stones for mosaics and other purposes, like Migliorini, Louette, Bianchi and Dubois. There were embroiderers, like Ballan and Fayet. In short, there was a group of artist-craftsmen such as the world has seldom seen assembled in a single place. Most of them received salaries from the king, in addition to the sums paid them for the objects they produced.

Such an assemblage of craftsmen was possible only because the king was purchasing vast quantities of luxuries with which to surround himself. The sums expended reached really enormous figures, though since the Gobelins was in good part responsible for the dazzling display about Louis XIV, the display which awed France and impressed the world, the price may not have been too high. Boissonnade estimates that between 1664 and 1683 the expenditures on the Gobelins, directly for the support and upkeep of it and its personnel, and indirectly for the purchase of the goods it produced, totaled about 3,500,000 *livres*.<sup>98</sup>

*The Savonnerie*.—Like the Gobelins, the Savonnerie was an establishment that had come down from the early part of the century. It, too, was taken over by the government under Colbert. But it was not transformed as the Gobelins was. It remained primarily a manufacture of rugs and carpets. The greater continuity in the case of the Savonnerie is illustrated by the fact that under Colbert sons of both the founders, Dupont and Lourdet, were active in it, while Simon Lourdet himself survived long enough to take part in its reorganization.

<sup>98</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtimens du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 385, 708, and *passim*; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 64-66; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 243.

The privileges of Simon Lourdet in the matter of rug-making had been several times confirmed under Louis XIII and Louis XIV, but by 1664 he seems to have ceased his activities at the Savonnerie, for he spoke of the steps taken in that year as "the reestablishment" of his venture. Such a cessation in a manufacture that was supplying France with an expensive product, which must be imported if it was not made within the realm, was bound to be distasteful to Colbert. He seems to have determined to revivify the establishment, and to do so he turned to a device which had first been tried under Louis XIII.

On March 31, 1664, a contract was drawn up between Colbert on the one hand and Simon Lourdet and his son Philippe on the other. It provided that the administrators of the *Hôpital général* of Paris were to supply the Lourdets with 60 apprentices over 10 years of age each year. The Lourdets undertook to teach them the art of rug-making and to pay the *Hôpital général* 100 *livres* for each. The *Hôpital* was to feed and clothe the apprentices. Two directors of the *Hôpital* were to administer the establishment at the Savonnerie. The apprentices were to hear mass every day, say their prayers, and learn the catechism. At the end of 6 years, they were to become masters and were to receive from the Lourdets a suit of clothes worth 36 *livres*. A painter from the Royal Academy was to teach the apprentices drawing and to inspect the designs used for making rugs.<sup>99</sup>

On July 6, 1664, the Lourdets wrote a letter to Colbert. They told him that since he had "reestablished" their enterprise, they had spent 8,000 *livres* on it. They were working hard on the 6 rugs for the Galerie d'Apollon (in the Louvre) and had finished 80 square ells. They hoped that Colbert would indemnify them for their expenses, see that they were paid what was due them under old agreements, "reestablish" the pension which had been granted them but which they had not received since 1661, and advance them some money to finance the work that was in progress. Colbert was seldom deaf to such pleas from entrepreneurs whom he was supporting. The Lourdets soon received 3,937 *livres*, 9 *sous* in payment for two rugs they had sold the queen in 1661. It is quite possible that it was the queen's failure to pay for these rugs and the cessation of the pension in 1661 that had forced the Lourdets out of business between 1661 and 1664.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 307-8, doc 21; O<sup>2</sup>, No. 2055, *liasse* 1, *mémoire* of 1713; decree of August 22, 1673; decree of November 4, 1687.

<sup>100</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 122, fol. 242; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 10.

The Lourdets were kept busy making rugs for the king. They received, for instance, 2,000 *livres* in April, 1665, for a "Turkish-style rug," and in 1666 and 1667 they were paid 18,000 *livres* for the rugs for the Gallerie d'Apollon which they had started in 1664. But in 1667 Simon Lourdet died. This must have been a blow to the enterprise, for he had behind him the experience of half a century spent in making rugs. Philippe Lourdet carried on the work, however, and in November, 1667, secured a confirmation for himself of the privileges that had been granted his father. Under Philippe Lourdet the Savonnerie went forward and turned out large and expensive carpets for the royal palaces. In 1668, for example, 12,150 *livres* was paid him by the king for rugs for the Tuileries, and 15,000 *livres* for rugs for the Louvre, as well as 1,081 *livres* for rugs of unspecified destination. In 1669 he was paid 20,500 *livres* for rugs for the Louvre, and in May, 1670, he was paid 17,000 *livres* for still more rugs.

In 1670, however, Philippe Lourdet followed his father to the grave, and the Savonnerie had to undergo yet another crisis. The management devolved upon Jeanne Haffrey Lourdet, widow of Philippe. But she did not carry on the work alone, for before 1673 Louis Dupont was made co-manager with her. He was the son of old Pierre Dupont, who had taught Simon Lourdet to make rugs and who with him had founded the manufacture of the Savonnerie. In 1639 Louis Dupont had received permission from the king to go to Constantinople, presumably to study rug-making there. In 1643 he was actually in that metropolis of the Levant, but at some later date he had returned to France and begun to make rugs in a shop in the Galleries of the Louvre, like his father. In 1669 he had sold the king a "little rug,"  $6\frac{1}{4}$  times  $2\frac{1}{12}$  ells, at 135 *livres* the square ell, the total price being 2,162 *livres*, 6 *sous*, 8 *deniers*. Though the Savonnerie was under the joint management of Louis Dupont and Jeanne Lourdet, they seem to have kept entirely separate the work done under the direction of each. The widow, during the years 1671 to 1673, was paid more than 30,000 *livres* for rugs made for the king, while Dupont on April 18, 1673, was paid 8,943 *livres*, 15 *sous* for 2 rugs totaling  $66\frac{1}{4}$  square ells.<sup>101</sup>

Meanwhile the Savonnerie had theoretically been operating under

<sup>101</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 308, doc. 22; O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, *liasse* 1, *mémoire* on the Savonnerie; *mémoire* of 1713; decree of August 22, 1673, Dupont's accounts, and so forth; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 96, 149, 177, 215, 280, 287, 385, 386, 444, 641, and *passim*; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,807, fols. 31-35.

the agreement of 1664 with the *Hôpital général*. But the arrangement had proved satisfactory to neither party. Between March, 1664, and October, 1672, the *Hôpital* had supplied the Savonnerie with 380 apprentices, or an average of about 44 a year. Of these 286 had died or run away before their time was up. So instead of receiving some 510 apprentices in 8½ years, the Savonnerie got only 94 who stayed at their posts.<sup>102</sup>

Nor was the arrangement profitable to the *Hôpital général*. To live up to its obligations as to supplying, feeding, and educating the apprentices had cost ~~that~~ institution some 10,000 *livres* a year, while the Lourdets had been unwilling or unable to pay the sums due to the *Hôpital*. In 1673 the directors of the *Hôpital* found its financial condition unsound and petitioned the king to take back the Savonnerie, which he had turned over to them in 1656, and to relieve them of their obligations under the contract of 1664 with the Lourdets. They asked the king, moreover, to indemnify them for the 90,000 *livres* they had spent on the apprentices, and for sums expended on repairing the buildings of the Savonnerie. By a decree of August 22, 1673, the king complied with part of their requests. It provided that the king should resume control of the Savonnerie and assume the responsibility for supporting the apprentices and maintaining the manufacture of rugs. The king was also to examine what indemnity it would be proper to pay to the *Hôpital général* for its expenditures, and how to compensate it for the loss of the Savonnerie. But the *Hôpital général* was to be held to provide the Savonnerie with the number of children stipulated in the contract of 1664, in so far as Colbert should judge necessary.<sup>103</sup>

Under the new dispensation the Savonnerie was conducted on much the same basis as the Gobelins. The king provided for the upkeep and enlargement of the buildings. He supplied the Savonnerie with a surgeon, a concierge, an almoner, and a painter who was to give art lessons to the apprentices. Le Brun was given control of the artistic side of the work, while Colbert was responsible for the enterprise as a whole. The king paid for the looms on which the rugs were made, but the other tools and the materials were provided by Dupont and the Widow Lourdet. Until September 1, 1675, the king paid for the board of the apprentices. Thus Dupont and the Widow Lourdet were in much the same position as the masters at the Gobelins. They directed the work,

<sup>102</sup> O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055; *mémoire* of 1713.

<sup>103</sup> O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, decree of August 22, 1673.

made rugs on contract for the king at so much per square ell, and paid their workers from the sums they received for their products.<sup>104</sup>

From the time of the reorganization down to November, 1683, Louis Dupont sold to the king 28 rugs totaling 758 $\frac{5}{6}$  square ells in area, for which the total price was 123,405 *livres*, 12 *sous*, 6 *deniers*. In the same period, the Widow Lourdet seems to have supplied the king with rugs to a comparable value. Up to September 1, 1675, she and Dupont received 135 *livres* per square ell for their rugs. On that date they agreed to relieve the king of his responsibility for feeding the apprentices. In return, the price paid for the rugs was raised to 165 *livres* the square ell.<sup>105</sup>

From 1664 to 1684, that is roughly the period in which the rugs ordered under Colbert were being delivered, the king spent on purchases of the products of the Savonnerie 421,200 *livres*, or an average of 21,060 *livres* a year. At the prices paid, these figures indicate a total production for the period of something like 2,700 square ells of rug. The number of rugs seems to have been in the neighborhood of 100.<sup>106</sup>

In the years after Colbert's death, the purchases from the Savonnerie declined somewhat. In the period from 1685 to 1692, Louvois as Superintendent of Buildings ordered rugs to the value of 115,000 *livres*, or an average of about 16,427 *livres* a year. After the death of Louvois the establishment declined still further, but the persistent effects of the efforts of Colbert are shown by a survey made in 1713, when it was planned to reorganize the Savonnerie. There was in that year only one master, aged 58 years. Under him, there were 9 workers aged from 52 to 64 (52, 54, 59, 60, 62, 62, 63, 63, 64). Their ages make it extremely probable that every one of these men had been trained at the Savonnerie in the period of Colbert, and that it was on the impetus supplied by him that the establishment was still running.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 66; O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, *liasse 1, mémoire* of 1692 or 1693.

<sup>105</sup> O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, *liasse 1*, account of sieur Dupont, 1684; *mémoire* of 1692 or 1693. See also Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 708, 776, 851, 922, 988, 1110, 1339, and *passim*.

<sup>106</sup> O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, *mémoire* of 1692 or 1693. Boissonnade's (*Colbert*, p. 66) estimate of 255,000 *livres* for the purchases from the Savonnerie and the money expended on its upkeep "in the time of Colbert" is much too low. The documents cited above specifically give the total of the purchases, exclusive of other expenditures, as 421,200 *livres* for the period from 1664 to 1684.

<sup>107</sup> In 1713 tradition had it that in 1684 there had been about 26 workers at the Savonnerie. See O<sup>1</sup>, No. 2055, *liasse 1, mémoire* of 1713. See also *ibid.*, *mémoire* of 1692 or 1693.



*Beauvais and Aubusson.*—In 1664, the same year in which he reëstablished the Savonnerie, Colbert started off on its troubled course a manufacture of tapestries at Beauvais. By an edict and letters patent of August, 1664, a privilege was granted to Louis Hinard, merchant tapestry-maker and bourgeois of the city of Paris. As justification for this step, the letters patent declared that the king was anxious to place his kingdom "in a position to get along without recourse to foreigners for the things necessary for the use and convenience of our subjects." Among such things were Flemish-style tapestries, of which the manufacture had been introduced into France by Henry IV. This manufacture seemed important to Louis XIV and to his "dear and well beloved sieur Colbert," who had informed the king that it could be entrusted to no one more capable than Louis Hinard.

The privileges granted to this entrepreneur were extensive. He was to have for 30 years the exclusive right to manufacture high and low-warp tapestries in Beauvais or elsewhere in Picardy. To aid him in starting the enterprise, the king was to give him 30,000 *livres* outright, providing that he and his associates put up at least 15,000 *livres* as capital. Further to assist Hinard and his associates, the king was to advance another 30,000 *livres* as a loan without interest for six years. Over the door of his establishment Hinard was to have the right to place a sign bearing the royal arms and the legend *Manufacture royale des tapisseries*. Within a year Hinard was to have in his employ 100 workers, French or foreign. This number was to be increased by 100 a year for each of the next 6 years. For every foreign worker imported by Hinard the king was to pay him a bounty of 30 *livres*. Since it was very important to instruct the French in the art of tapestry-making, Hinard was to keep at least 50 French apprentices in his establishment. Toward the board and lodging of each of these apprentices, the king was to contribute 30 *livres* a year. After 6 years of service as an apprentice and 2 as a journeyman, a man was to be received in Beauvais as a master tapestry-maker, without further formality. A foreigner after 8 years' service was to be reputed a naturalized Frenchman. Hinard, his associates, and his workers were to be exempt from the lodging of soldiers and all duties and taxes. For the service of his establishment, Hinard was to be allowed to establish painters, dyers, brewers, bakers, and so forth, with the same privileges as his regular workers. Wool, dyes, and other materials bought for the establishment were to be transported in boats and

wagons bearing the royal arms and they were to be exempt from the duties of the "five big farms." Colbert was to assign Hinard a special mark to be used on his tapestries. No one was to copy the patterns or designs of Hinard's tapestries. On tapestries sold by Hinard in the area of the "five big farms" no duties were to be levied. On tapestries exported the duty was fixed at 20 *livres* for a piece 20 ells long. Hinard, his associates, and his workers were to enjoy the right of *committimus*. Hinard was forbidden to hire away workers from the established manufactures of high-warp tapestries, and all persons were forbidden to hire away his workers. Fines running up to 10,000 *livres* were provided for infraction of these provisions.<sup>108</sup>

Before July, 1665, Hinard seems to have collected both the 30,000 *livres* due him as a gift and the similar sum due him as a loan. In 1668 his enterprise underwent some sort of a reorganization, and 18,000 *livres* more was put into the manufacture at Beauvais by the king. Nor did Hinard neglect to collect the sums promised him by the king to help pay the expenses of apprentices. He secured payments, for example, on 102 apprentices in 1669; on 161 in 1670; on 149 in 1671; on 145 in 1672; on 150 in 1673; and on 139 in 1674. The bounties on the arrival of foreign workers present something of a problem, from their very multiplicity. In 1666 Hinard collected bounties on 71 such workers; in 1667, on 42; in 1669, on 23; in 1670, on 103; in 1671, on 79; in 1672, on 43; in 1673, on 57; and in 1674, on 55. It seems unlikely that Hinard imported 473 foreign workers in the space of about 7 years. It is quite possible that he succeeded in collecting on foreign and even French workers other than new arrivals.<sup>109</sup>

In addition to such financial aid, Hinard received substantial orders for tapestries from the king. Though he specialized in the low-warp tapestries which were less expensive than the high-warp ones, and in representations of landscapes and greenery which brought less than other subjects, still his products commanded good prices. For example, in 1667 Hinard sold the king a tapestry depicting animals, another portraying persons, and four of greenery (*verdure*) for a total of

<sup>108</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 64-70; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1456A, edict and letters patent of August, 1664; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,786, fols. 259-67; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 336-37, doc. 81; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 244-45; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 786-87; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 39-40.

<sup>109</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 8, 49, 62, 152, 172, 207, 286, 385, 444, 558, 641, 707, 1201, and *passim*.

16,519 *livres*, 18 *sous*, 4 *deniers*. In May, 1669, the king paid 41,789 *livres* for 13 tapestries. In October, 1670, Hinard sold one to the king for 2,700 *livres*. In February, 1671, 8 tapestries, depicting greenery, sold to the king, brought Hinard 12,552 *livres*, and in November, 1679, 6 representing landscapes were purchased by the king for 10,298 *livres*, 10 *deniers*. In 7 years Hinard received orders for tapestries from the king totaling 110,000 *livres*.<sup>110</sup>

Despite all the aid extended to Hinard, directly in the form of subsidies and indirectly in the form of royal orders for goods, the manufacture of tapestries at Beauvais did not progress without difficulty. In 1664, not long after the issuance of the letters patent, Hinard wrote Colbert that "the furniture, looms, tools, wool, and things necessary for the manufacture of these tapestries" were ready and that the houses at Beauvais had been bought. In fact, Hinard's first burst of energy seems to have carried him over the preliminary hurdles with a good deal of celerity. But by 1666 he felt the need of new capital in his enterprise, even though he had received large amounts of cash from the king. On May 5 of that year he took in one Pierre Monnerot, as coproprietor of the establishment at Beauvais, in view of which Monnerot invested 100,000 *livres* in the enterprise. In January, 1668, a certain Bertrand François Huguet bought three-tenths of Monnerot's share in the business, which was equal to three-twentieths of the whole, and at the same time advanced 8,000 *livres* to the enterprise. A little later the need for still more capital caused the three proprietors to agree to take in two more backers, the sieurs Begue and Menestrol, who put in 30,000 *livres* each. Huguet was also to invest 22,000 *livres* more. But he failed to do so. Then Hinard fell into a dispute with his partners and prevailed upon the Council of State to dissolve the partnership by a decree of May 26, 1669. The decree ordered Hinard to pay back, before 1673, to his associates the sums they had invested.

Huguet was an official, with the title of *conseiller et secretaire du roy*, and he had been persuaded (probably by Colbert) to put money into the establishment at Beauvais "only in the thought of doing something pleasing to the king." So when Hinard paid off Monnerot, Begue, and Menestrol, but failed to pay him, Huguet was somewhat incensed. From this situation arose a lawsuit, for Hinard claimed the right to deduct

<sup>110</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 172, 385, 444, 555, 1201; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 186.

certain expenditures at Beauvais from the 38,000 *livres* due Huguet. The dispute was still dragging on as late as 1676 and 1677.<sup>111</sup>

In spite of such diversions, Hinard carried forward the work at Beauvais. In 1667 the buildings of the establishment were not yet complete, but they seem to have been finished by 1669, for in that year Hinard started to add to them a new shop which was to hold 15 looms. This entrepreneur was always ready to turn to Colbert for help and additional privileges. In 1667, for example, he asked for and secured a decree of the Council of State exempting from the *taille* the apothecary who looked after the health of the workers.

In May, 1670, Colbert urged Louis XIV to visit Hinard's tapestry works at Beauvais. The minister suggested to the king that if he could not inspect the manufacture in person, he should at least exhort the mayor and the officials of the town to take an interest in it. The Beauvais manufacture and that of Van Robais at Abbéville were, according to Colbert, among the most important that had been established by Louis XIV. A show of interest by the king would give them life and vigor and prevent their decay. "Your Majesty knows too well," concluded Colbert, "the advantages that his finances receive from them, not to be persuaded to take the trouble." In reply, Louis wrote Colbert, "I will go to the manufactures of Abbéville and Beauvais and talk as I think I ought to and as you write me to."<sup>112</sup>

In the same year, however, Colbert began to show that he was a bit disgusted with Hinard's attitude, for in November, 1670, he wrote Belinzani, who was going on a tour of inspection of manufacturing establishments, that he would find Hinard always avid for favors. This entrepreneur, Colbert added, was ruining his business by charging excessive prices for his products. Yet Colbert continued to support and to encourage Hinard whenever he felt he could do so. An interesting case in point occurred in 1678. On April 1 of that year Colbert wrote to Le Blanc, the intendant of Rouen, in these terms:

The sieur Hinart, entrepreneur of the manufacture of tapestries established at Beauvais, complains that having transported tapestries of his manufacture to Rouen, the man named Bostinet, who also had brought thither tapestries of the manufacture of Auvergne, talked in a fashion that tends

<sup>111</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 123 *bis*, fol. 575; "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 377, fols. 55-57.

<sup>112</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 761; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fol. 71; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, cclxxiii; Louis XIV, *Oeuvres*, V, 467-68.

to bring the manufacture of Beauvais into disrepute; and since the king wishes that this establishment be sustained, it is necessary that you summon Bostinet and that you talk to him firmly and give him to understand that if he continues to disparage the manufacture of Beauvais, the orders necessary to make him regret having talked against this industry will be given.<sup>113</sup>

Hinard continued in the management of the manufacture at Beauvais down to the time of Colbert's death. But by 1683 the enterprise was in a sorry state and Colbert was planning steps to rehabilitate the establishment. These plans centered around a certain sieur Philippe Behagle, a man of Flemish birth. Behagle had come to the Gobelins in 1660 and had worked there for a number of years, perfecting himself in the art of tapestry-making. Then in 1672 Colbert and the intendant at Oudenarde had brought him to that city to set up a tapestry manufacture there. From Oudenarde he had been transferred to Maintenon and from Maintenon to Glatigny. After 15 months in this last town he had been sent to Tournai, where for 6 years he had worked at making tapestries. In 1683 Colbert arranged for Behagle to go to Beauvais and take charge of the enterprise there. The minister promised to secure for him 100,000 *livres* to use for capital in building up the enterprise. Colbert's death disrupted these arrangements, but Behagle was able to raise privately a loan of 33,727 *livres*, and on February 21, 1684, Louvois, who had succeeded Colbert as Superintendent of Buildings, secured for Behagle a 30-year privilege and put him in charge of the Beauvais manufacture. With varying success, and harassed by financial difficulties, Behagle presided over the enterprise down to the early years of the eighteenth century.<sup>114</sup>

Though the manufacture of tapestries at Aubusson, in Auvergne, was quite different from those at the Gobelins or Beauvais, it too felt the stimulus of Colbert's attention. For many years there had been established at Aubusson a manufacture of low-warp tapestries of a fairly inexpensive type. The industry was in the hands of some two score or more small independent masters, who sold their products at fairs. It was called to Colbert's attention that this manufacture was not in a prosperous condition. Accordingly he proceeded to take steps. On August 30, 1664, a royal *lettre de cachet* was issued. It ordered the chief inhabitants of Aubusson to meet and to draw up plans and regulations

<sup>113</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 576; "Manuscrits français," No. 8731, fols. 284-85.

<sup>114</sup> F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1456A, a series of documents on Behagle, dating from 1684, 1698, and so on.

for the improvement of the manufacture of tapestries. This *lettre de cachet* promised them favorable treatment and directed them to refer all questions to Colbert.

On September 28, 1664, such a meeting was summoned by "the sound of bells." The meeting appointed Jacques Bertrand, one of the local merchant tapestry-makers, to wait upon Colbert and to report to him the state of the manufacture. Bertrand was directed to tell the minister that Aubusson had been making tapestries from time immemorial, that "the inhabitants of the place seem to have been born to the work," that it was the only city in France where such a manufacture was in successful operation, and that almost the whole population, to the number of 1,500 or 1,600, was involved in the industry. It was true. Bertrand was to admit, that the manufacture had fallen off somewhat from its "former perfection." But he was to attribute this to the "over-great burden of *tailles*" and to the "continual passage of soldiers." He was to suggest that privileges might be granted to Aubusson, similar to those granted by Henry IV to Comans and La Planche or by Louis XIV to Hinard.

Bertrand duly went and had an interview with Colbert. The minister told Bertrand that what had reduced the sales of Aubusson tapestries and caused them to be held in "less esteem" was abuses in their manufacture. The remedy was to draw up a regulation and get it confirmed by the king. In accordance with Colbert's advice, a meeting of those connected with the tapestry manufacture was held on May 18, 1665, and articles of regulation were drawn up. The regulations were not very elaborate. They provided that a general meeting of the tapestry-makers was to choose four inspectors for three year terms. These officials were to have the right to inspect the shops in which tapestries were made and the establishments where they were dyed. They were to inspect, at a central office, all tapestries manufactured and to mark those of suitable quality with a lead seal. Thenceforth no one was to become a master tapestry-maker at Aubusson without having served three years as an apprentice and four years as a journeyman. The king was to be asked to establish at Aubusson a good painter to make "beautiful designs" and to train apprentices. The king was also to be requested to send to Aubusson at his own expense a good dyer and a good bleacher, who were likewise to train apprentices. The hope was expressed that the king would reduce the *tailles*, put an end to the lodging

of soldiers, and establish *juges-consuls* with authority to settle commercial disputes.

By letters patent of July, 1665, the king confirmed the regulations suggested by the tapestry-makers. He agreed to supply them at his own expense with a "good painter" and a dyer of wool. He authorized each master tapestry-maker to put over the door of his shop in "big characters" the legend *Manufacture royale des tapisseries*. The question of *tailles* and the lodging of soldiers was to be given further consideration. Eventually the king also aided the new establishment by means of orders for tapestries, and among those thus favored was Bertrand. The painter assigned to provide Aubusson with designs was P. de Mesle, a bourgeois of Paris. The manufacture at Aubusson continued, if it did not exactly flourish, and even in the twentieth century "Beauvais" and "Gobelins" tapestries were still being made there on old hand looms.<sup>115</sup>

In addition to the tapestry manufactures of the Gobelins, Beauvais, and Aubusson, that directed by Sebastien de la Planche seems also to have been a *manufacture royale*. It was situated in the faubourg Saint-Germain of Paris. For a single set of seven tapestries, delivered in 1667 and 1668, the king paid la Planche 89,175 *livres*.<sup>116</sup>

*Artistic handicraft work.*—Nor was the Gobelins the only center of artistic handicraft work. The workers of the Galleries of the Louvre, as organized under Henry IV, continued to enjoy their privileges, and in some departments at least attained new heights of prestige. In 1671 the privileges of this group of workers were confirmed by royal letters patent. At that time, in the Louvre or the annexes in the Tuileries, there were some thirty workshops in which were established painters, sculptors, cabinetmakers, goldsmiths, enamelers, clock-makers, historiographers, and at least one representative of a variety of other arts—a geographer, an inventor of machines, an engraver, a worker in gilt and damascene, a printer, an embroiderer, a maker of coins, a rug-maker, an armorer, a maker of mathematical instruments, and so forth.<sup>117</sup> Of

<sup>115</sup> AD XI, No. 43, *liasse* 1, letters patent of July, 1665; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,786, fols. 268-71, 272-81; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 245; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 187.

<sup>116</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 173, 214; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 186.

<sup>117</sup> The workers and their pursuits may be of some interest. They were:

Jean Varin, sculptor, coin-maker, medal maker; Charles Errard, Jean Noiret, Antoine Stella, Benoist Sarazin, painters; François Girardon, sculptor; Claude Ballin, Loir,

these workers, some like Ballin, the goldsmith, were not only famous craftsmen but great artists as well. They were joined a year later (1672) by André-Charles Boulle, who secured a shop in the Louvre where he trained his sons and with them made cabinets that are still accorded places in museums and bought by collectors for astounding sums. Aside from their privileges and their exemption from guild supervision, most of the workers in the Louvre received pensions from the king and were favored by royal orders. Some of them were entrepreneurs on no mean scale. Boulle had his lodgings and two workshops in the Louvre and employed twenty-six workmen. He, like the rest, made goods for the king, since as Colbert once put it, "There is no one but the king of France who gives employment to sculptors, painters, and other clever workers; if His Majesty does not keep them busy they will all go elsewhere and seek a livelihood."<sup>118</sup>

*Summary.*—What Colbert said was true. The king gave employment to hundreds and thousands of craftsmen of all degrees of skill and merit, from great painters to humble stonecutters, and from wealthy goldsmiths to half-starved loom boys. The royal buildings, gardens, coaches, portraits, medals, clothes, furniture, food, jewelry, and so forth required a veritable army of workers. It might truly be said that the greatest industry in France was supplying the wants of the king and his court. Since many of these wants were for luxury goods of an artistic nature, the industries that supplied them were given an impetus, the effects of which may still be noted. It is not by chance alone that tapestries are still made at the Gobelins on looms dating from the seventeenth century, nor that French cookery is still esteemed the best. In catering to the wants of a luxury-loving monarch who gloried in dis-

goldsmiths; Guillaume Sanson, geographer; Laurent Tessier de Montarsy, goldsmith in gold; Vittorio Siri, Theophraste Renaudot, historiographers; Henri Martinot, Henri Bidault, clock-makers; Jean Dominique Cassini, mathematician; Francois-Marie Borzon, painter of land and seascapes; Jean Le Fevre, maker of high-warp tapestries; Charles Vigarini, inventor of machines; Louis Dupont, maker of Levant rugs; Claude Meilan, painter and engraver; Vincent Petit, goldsmith and sculptor in bronze; Jean Masse, cabinet and furniture-maker; Jean Valdor, painter and designer; Henri Petit, furbisher, gilder and damascener; Israel Silvestre, engraver and designer; Sebastien Mabre-Cramoisy, printer; Dominique Lherminot, painter and embroiderer; Jacques Bailli, painter of miniatures and maker of goods in the Chinese style; Philippe le Bas, maker of mathematical instruments; Bertrand Piraube, armorer.

<sup>118</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,807, fols. 31-35; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 60, 61, and 302-4, doc. 19; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 308-10; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, ccxxx.



play, Colbert was happy (if the expense was not too great), for on the one hand he could please the king, like a good courtier, and on the other he could encourage French industries.

### 3. MIRRORS, GLASS, AND EARTHENWARE

Colbert's efforts in behalf of the manufacture of mirrors may be compared to those he made in behalf of the manufacture both of lace and of tapestries. As in the case of lace, Colbert sought to create in France, at the expense of Venice, an industry that was at least partly new, and he formed a company to accomplish his ends. As in the case of the tapestries, a large portion of the output was purchased by the king for the embellishment of his royal dwellings.

When Colbert came to power, Venice still had an almost complete monopoly of the manufacture of mirrors, despite the fact that the industry seems to have originated in Lorraine, and despite the efforts to acclimate it in France in the reigns of Henry II, Henry IV, Louis XIII, and again in the early years of Louis XIV. Colbert was informed that France spent more than 300,000 *livres* a year to purchase 200 cases or more of Venetian mirrors, and that they were becoming more and more stylish as an article for the decoration both of boudoirs and reception rooms. For Colbert there could be but one solution. The manufacture of mirrors must be introduced into France.

*Workers from Venice.*—In the fall of 1664 Colbert wrote to Bonzi, bishop of Béziers and French ambassador at Venice, telling him to enlist the services of some Venetian mirror-makers, and to send them to France. Bonzi replied, on November 8, that the task was no light one. He reported that there were only a few mirror-makers. They lived at Murano, near Venice, earned from 9 *livres* to 12 *livres* a day, and thought that there was no country other than their own. If any worker emigrated he was likely to lose his property or even his life and to subject his family to retaliation. But Bonzi declared that, in spite of these obstacles, he would endeavor to carry out Colbert's wishes.<sup>119</sup>

In December, 1664, Colbert ordered Bonzi to enlist the workers, and the bishop began negotiations, using a local merchant as intermediary. Five months later Colbert sent an agent, the sieur de Jouan, to Venice, to aid in the flight of the workers. To Jouan he gave 2,000 *livres* to

<sup>119</sup> Frémy, *Histoire de la manufacture royale des glaces de France*, pp. 1-22; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 693-94; "Manuscrits français," No. 14,294, fols. 266-67.

cover expenses. Once in Venice, Jouan was put in touch by Bonzi with a mirror-maker named La Motta. Toward the end of June Jouan succeeded in smuggling La Motta and three of his assistants out of Venice, without interference. Advised of the departure of the workers, the Venetian authorities uncovered the whole plot, threatened the relatives of the emigrés with punishment, and directed their ambassador at Paris to persuade the fugitives to return.

Stimulated to activity, the ambassador, Sagredo, made a number of investigations. He reported from Paris that a man from Liège named Bon was making mirrors, but of poor quality, in the faubourg Saint-Antoine. A gentleman from Lorraine named Arexel was making fine mirrors in the faubourg Saint-Michel, but was in financial difficulties and had received no aid from Colbert. Finally, a native of Murano named Mazzolar, who had been wandering about Europe for fifteen years, had been hired by Colbert and since March had been working to create a new manufacture in the faubourg Saint-Antoine. As late as July 31 the ambassador could get no word of La Motta and his aides.

Meanwhile Colbert was not idle. Working through Castellan, an Italian glassmaker established at Nevers, to whom he gave 4,600 *livres* for expenses, he secured another group of Venetian workers in July, 1665. Castellan sent his nephew on the dangerous errand. After many hazards and adventures, he arrived back in France with 10 mirror-makers. But 4 of them decided, almost at once, to return to Italy. Colbert had the 4 arrested, held them for a while at Lyon, then let them go home. The new group was quickly brought to Paris, where Sagredo, the Venetian ambassador, got in touch with them and threatened them with dire consequences if they remained to work there. But their doubts were overcome by gifts and favors from Colbert. Their leader, Antonio de la Rivetta, was given a pension of 1,200 *livres* a year, in addition to other payments, while 3 of the other workers were given smaller pensions, 800 *livres* to Civrano, the same to Barbini, and 450 *livres* to Morasse. Thus encouraged, they signed an agreement by which they undertook to work in the new mirror manufacture for 4 years.

But Sagredo's troubles were not over, for before the year was out still another batch of Venetian workers arrived. Dismayed by the exodus of workers, the Venetian authorities told the ambassador to use any means in his power to get the workers back. He was specifically given the power to offer them safe-conducts and to promise them employment

in Venice. Toward the end of 1665 Sagredo was replaced as ambassador by Giustiniani. But the newcomer was, at first, but little more successful than his predecessor. He did, however, persuade the workers to promise not to teach their secrets to anyone, and in April, 1666, he was able to send back to Venice a few of the less important artisans who had not received pensions nor signed contracts.

Colbert was ever ready to counteract such efforts. He tried to marry off Barbini and Morasse. He tried to get the wives of Rivetta and Civrano to join their husbands. He offered some of the workers additional pensions of 1,000 *livres* each, if they would train French apprentices. As a culminating favor, Colbert on April 29, 1666, visited the mirror works with Louis XIV. The king showed great interest in the operations and skill of the Italians and had Colbert make them presents of money on the spot.

This last touch was too much for the Venetian authorities. They authorized Giustiniani to promise the workers at Paris free pardons and gifts of money. They forged letters purporting to come from the wives of Rivetta and Civrano and demanding the return of the absentee husbands. But in this they overreached themselves, for the two men realized that the missives had been concocted by persons more intelligent and better educated than their deserted wives. Though the ruse failed, the workers were impressed and offered to return home if Giustiniani gave them a categorical order to do so. This he feared to do, lest he call down on Venice diplomatic and other reprisals by Louis XIV. The workers had not expected their offer to be accepted. Indeed they would probably have been disappointed if it had been, for they were enjoying life in Paris immensely.<sup>120</sup>

After much maneuvering on both sides, Colbert, who in turn had made use of forged letters and who had sent a special agent to Murano, outwitted the Venetian authorities and brought the wives of Rivetta and Civrano to France. Keyed up to sterner measures, the inquisitors of Venice suggested to Giustiniani that it would be well to have Rivetta and the ablest workers killed. The ambassador took advantage of dissension at the furnaces in the faubourg Saint-Antoine and got in touch with La Motta, who had been one of the first workers to come to Paris and who felt he had been less favorably treated than Rivetta. Urged on by Giustiniani, La Motta gathered an armed band and attacked his rival.

<sup>120</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 22-38.

But Rivetta, forewarned, collected his friends and a pitched battle took place, in which La Motta and two of his supporters were wounded and which was ended only by the opportune arrival of a company of soldiers.

The trouble was soon settled and work resumed. Thwarted in this attempt, Giustiniani had recourse to other means. In January, 1667, one of the best workers at the mirror manufacture died under such circumstances that it seems certain that he was poisoned. Toward the end of the month, Morasse, one of the most skilled of the Italians, likewise died suddenly, again almost certainly of poison. Colbert, determined to fill the gaps thus created, arranged to secure more workers from Venice. But the Venetian authorities, whom Giustiniani kept closely informed, were able to thwart Colbert's plans and to arrest four workers who were about to depart. They were imprisoned, and it was later said that they had committed suicide.<sup>121</sup>

The armed outbreak and the poisonings had a profound effect on the Italians who remained in Paris, and the newly arrived wives seem to have found the city less attractive than their husbands. The chief workers decided to go home. But they were in a position to drive a hard bargain. They demanded a written pardon and a gift of 4,000 or 5,000 ducats. Giustiniani was able to satisfy them. Meanwhile the French entrepreneurs of the mirror manufacture were becoming thoroughly disgusted with the Italian workers, who were always quarreling, ever demanding more money, and persistent in their refusal to share their secrets.

On November 30, 1666, du Noyer, the chief of the entrepreneurs who were backing the mirror manufacture, reported to Colbert that while the company was able to make satisfactory mirrors, its condition was serious. The Venetian workers were most reluctant to teach their art to others. If they were to die or to leave, the company stood to lose two-thirds of its investment. Further, there were great inconveniences inherent in the situation. One of the Venetians had recently hurt his leg. Work on the mirrors had to be stopped for ten days, although the pay of the workers kept on and the fires had to be kept up. Still, du Noyer thought that the company had gone too far to retreat. He felt that the secrets of the Venetians must be wrested from them, even if the price was high. He proposed to Colbert that they be given an estate worth

<sup>121</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 38-45, 368-70.

60,000 *livres*, that they be promised pensions for their wives and children, and that they be given 2,000 *écus* for each French apprentice they took on. He realized, he said, that the terms were exorbitant, but he was doubtful if the Venetians would accept. If they refused, du Noyer suggested that a new plant be set up, and that all Frenchmen who claimed to know anything about making mirrors be invited to come there and carry on experiments.<sup>122</sup>

So importunate did the Italians become and so much trouble did they make that one day in March, 1667, when they threatened to leave Paris, the French entrepreneurs dismissed them. Then Rivetta and his confrères insisted that they wanted to stay. But the entrepreneurs were firm and reduced their pay. The upshot was that in April Rivetta, Civrano, and Barbini started home, and somewhat later other workers followed them. The Venetian authorities heaped appreciative congratulations on Giustiniani, and punctually lived up to their promises. The repatriated workers were unmolested, and they were given the sums of money that had been agreed on. But these mirror-workers were subjected to both the ill-will and the competition of their fellows at Murano. By 1670 their French experience had grown to seem very attractive in retrospect. Rivetta, Barbini, and Civrano made overtures to the French ambassador at Venice, M. de Saint-André, with a view to going back to France. Saint-André passed the word along to Colbert. But Colbert wrote a *finis* to the whole episode by a letter in which he said that the mirror manufacture was running in a satisfactory fashion without the Italians. Of these three in particular, he declared, "They gave so much trouble while they were working in the manufacture at Paris, and showed so much malignity in their spirit, that I do not believe that it would be advantageous to invite them thither a second time."<sup>123</sup>

*Formation of the mirror company.*—The story of the Venetian workmen is but one part of the development of mirror-making in France. While Colbert was arranging for the services of these Italian artisans on the one hand, on the other he was anxiously presiding over the formation and progress of a company for the manufacture of mirrors. Early in 1665, before any workers had been brought from Venice, Colbert had selected Nicolas du Noyer to be the central figure in the new company. Du Noyer was receiver of the *taillon* at Orléans and had been

<sup>122</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 45-47; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 790-93.

<sup>123</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 47-51; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 529.

engaged, two years earlier, in some experiments in glassmaking. Associated with him in the formation of the company were a group of officials whose chief qualifications seem to have been some financial resources and a willingness to coöperate. They included du Noyer's brother Claude, *conseiller secrétaire* of the king; Jean-Antoine Ranchin, *conseiller secrétaire* of the king and receiver-general of taxes in the generality of Rouen; Pierre Pecquot, *conseiller secrétaire* of the king; and Jean Mignier, receiver-general of taxes at Alençon.

In January, 1665, the company was formed and Colbert secured for du Noyer 12,000 *livres* from royal funds, to aid in paying the initial expenses. Acting under Colbert's orders, du Noyer bought several buildings in the faubourg Saint-Antoine and prepared lodgings against the coming of the Venetians. The artisans arrived at the beginning of October, 1665, and were put straightway to work, since their compatriot, Mazzolar, had been busy since March making preparations. In September the capital of the company had been fixed at 60,000 *livres*, divided into 20 shares of which each member held 4.

On October 8 the royal letters patent were issued to found the company officially and to endow it with extensive privileges. They opened with a significant declaration, for Louis said:

We have, by our favors, invited foreigners who have a reputation for excelling in some types of manufacturing, to come and establish themselves, as they are doing daily, in the cities and places of our kingdom which are judged the most suitable and convenient for the execution of their propositions.

Among foreign manufactures, the letters went on, the mirrors made in Venice were "the most universally esteemed." The king had therefore listened favorably to the proposals of Nicolas du Noyer, who wished to establish a manufacture in the faubourgs of Paris or elsewhere, to bring in Venetian workers, and to make mirrors as large and as fine as those of Murano near Venice.

Since Colbert had examined and approved the propositions, the king was granting du Noyer the necessary privileges. The entrepreneur and his associates were to have the right to make Venetian mirrors, window glass, beads for the Indies, vases, enamel ware, table ware "both to serve for the ornament of our Royal Houses and for the public convenience." The privilege was to be exclusive and was to run for 20 years, during which period no one in France was to make such products without permission from the company. No noble joining the company would

thereby impair his status. On the contrary, du Noyer and his associates were to have the privileges of members of the royal household and were to be exempt from all taxes and duties, including the *taille*. The company was to have the right to secure necessary materials anywhere in France. On its products it was to pay no taxes, duties, or tolls inside France. On goods exported, if the cases were marked with a special insignia to be chosen by Colbert, it was to pay only one-third of the regular duties. Foreign workers who remained in the service of the company for 8 years were to be reputed naturalized citizens and were to be exempt from ~~taxes~~ taxes. French workers who had paid the *taille* were to continue to do so, but the amounts due from them were not to be increased. On the plants and offices of the company might be placed the inscription *Manufacture Royale des Glaces de Miroirs*. The company's porters might wear royal liveries. The king was to grant the company 12,000 *livres* as a loan without interest for 4 years. Finally, the company was to have the right to import from Venice 40 cases of mirrors before 1667, so as to supply the French market while it was getting its own production organized. It was well that this last provision was made, for although work was carried on intensively, beginning in October, 1665, no satisfactory mirrors were turned out until the end of February, 1666.<sup>124</sup>

Aid from the government to the mirror company was not confined to the privileges granted by the letters patent. The tariff of 1664 had placed a moderate duty of 5 percent ad valorem on mirrors. In April, 1666, Colbert planned to lay a heavy import duty on Venetian mirrors. But the Venetian workers at Paris, wishing to avoid any unnecessary friction with their home city, persuaded him to change the form of this regulation. Accordingly the company was given the sole right to sell mirrors in France, and merchants were ordered to supply themselves from it. The tariff of 1667, however, laid fairly heavy duties on the importation of foreign mirrors. The duties were arranged in a sliding scale, according to size. Thus on mirrors from 14 to 20 inches high, 8 *livres* the dozen was to be paid. On those from 20 to 30 inches high the duty was 15 *livres* the dozen. On those over 30 inches, it was 25 *livres* the dozen.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 52 ff., 156, 218-19, 367-68; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,733, fols. 138-39; AD XI, No. 45, *liasse* 3; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 438-40.

<sup>125</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, p. 18; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* of 1693; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 259-60.

Colbert was ever ready, too, to uphold the company's monopoly. A decree of the Council of State of April 19, 1666, confirmed its exclusive rights. An earlier decree of the sixth of the same month had forbidden a certain sieur d'Hamezil, who was making glass in a faubourg of Paris, to carry on his operations. When it was discovered, in 1669, that a man named La Roche, of Rouen, was making mirrors under the pretense that they were for optical purposes, a new decree, dated May 6, reaffirmed the monopoly of the company and forbade La Roche to make mirrors or other objects mentioned in the latter's patent.<sup>126</sup>

Colbert was also called on for another kind of aid. In April, 1666, du Noyer wrote him that the company had sunk 150,000 *livres* in the venture and was in desperate straits. "I have done more than I am able," he declared; "up till now all has gone off with honor, but I am beginning to be pressed, and I cannot hold on 4 days without being succored." Colbert came to his rescue, and the amount of money invested in the enterprise continued to increase, for in November, 1666, du Noyer reported that it totaled 180,000 *livres*. At the same time the entrepreneur said, "The possibility of making mirrors in France as beautiful as those of Venice is no longer to be doubted, so long as the Venetian workers are willing to work at it." But much depended on them, for if they stopped their labors, the 200 other workers were forced into idleness; and if the fires were kept up, they consumed five *toises* of wood a day, while if they were extinguished, the loss occasioned was 20,000 *livres*.<sup>127</sup>

*Reorganization and progress.*—In 1667 a new problem arose in connection with a certain Richard Lucas, sieur de Nehou. This gentleman had taken over a glass manufacture at Tourlaville, in Normandy, in 1653. After 1665 he operated under authorization of the maréchal de Villeroy, who held an old privilege dated 1647. Strictly speaking, Nehou was out of order, for the letters patent of the mirror company had revoked all previous, conflicting privileges. But on his side he had two things—success and supporters. His success was first marked by the fact that he was able to make glass that was pure white, instead of being greenish in tinge, as most glass had been up to then. His supporters included Colbert's own son, the marquis de Seignelay, and

<sup>126</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 223–24; Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, p. 56.

<sup>127</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 57 ff.; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 790–93.



Chamillart, an official with a great career before him. Furthermore, Tourlaville, near Cherbourg, was an ideal site for a glass manufacture, since large quantities of wood could be obtained cheaply from the forest of Brix. By 1665 Nehou had secured the services of some young Normans who had studied glassmaking in Venice. It was said that he had also sent spies to Paris to discover the processes used in the *manufacture royale* there, and that he had hired away from it one of its Italians, Mazzolar. Thus he was able to begin making mirrors illegally, but successfully. In 1667 he produced one twelve inches high and presented it to Colbert. Through Seignelay, he obtained authorization, in the face of the company's rights, to go on making mirrors.

In this situation du Noyer and the mirror company saw in which direction lay the better part of valor. They invited Nehou to join the company. At first Nehou refused. But Colbert brought pressure on him and he was at length persuaded to join forces with the *manufacture royale*. At the same time the company strengthened its position and more than doubled its nominal capital (it was raised to 170,000 *livres*) by taking in Pierre Jousset and Philippe Pocquelin, merchants of Paris, who were the most important sellers of mirrors in France. The advent of Nehou led to a further reorganization of the company, which was consummated by an agreement of September 23, 1667. By the terms of this document it was arranged that Jousset and Pocquelin were to have a half interest in the company, while the members of the original company were to have two-fifths and Nehou one-tenth.

The agreement further provided that no members of the company were to do business on their own account in connection with mirrors and that the members of the company were to meet at its office every Thursday, from nine o'clock till noon, to carry on its business. For attending such meetings a member was to receive a half *louis d'or* and a half a pound of wax. An accounting of the company's affairs was to be made every three months. Four members were necessary to authorize any transaction. If any member died, his heirs were to provide a member suitable to work in the company; if not, they were to be paid off in a year's time. To secure the blessing of God for the company, 300 *livres* was to be given each year to charity. In deciding matters unforeseen in the agreement, the votes of the members of the old company were to count as three, while Jousset and Pocquelin were to have one vote each. In cases of disagreement between members, the dispute was to be

arbitrated. No member was to sell his share in the company without the consent of the other members.

As a result of this reorganization, Nehou abandoned his small glass-works and built near-by a plant for the *manufacture royale* which was henceforth to be an integral part of it. In December, 1670, royal letters patent were issued on Colbert's advice, granting as a site for the works at Tourlaville 12 *arpents* of royal land, in return for a nominal annual payment of 12 *livres*. Nehou remained in charge of the Tourlaville plant until his death in 1675, when he was succeeded by his nephew, Guillaume-Lucas de Bonval, who held the post until 1720. Colbert was so pleased with the reorganization of the company in 1667, which promised to increase its strength greatly, that he secured for it in 1668 2 grants of 15,000 *livres* each from the royal funds. In September, 1668, because they were receiving no dividends, Mignier and Claude du Noyer sold their shares in the company to the remaining members. In August, 1669, Jousset died and the company was reorganized into the form it was to retain till 1684. Pocquelin, Ranchin, Pecquot, Nicolas du Noyer, and Nehou were each assigned 4 of the 20 shares into which the capital was divided.<sup>128</sup>

By 1669 the company was turning out mirrors with considerable success. But Colbert kept a watchful eye on conditions at Venice. On October 4 he wrote to Saint-André, who had been sent thither as ambassador in 1668, to ask for information about the situation of the mirror business. Six weeks later he wrote Saint-André again, to emphasize the importance of forcing French merchants to buy mirrors in France, lest the manufacture there be "greatly retarded." From time to time Colbert renewed his instructions, and in March, 1670, Saint-André sent him a report on the mirror manufacture at Venice. When Saint-André was replaced by the comte d'Avaux (1672), the new ambassador received similar instructions and sent similar reports. Down to 1671, some mirrors for the royal dwellings were bought in Italy. But after that time the *manufacture royale* seems to have been able to supply all the king's needs for such articles. From it, in 1672, the king purchased 700 mirrors.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 61-62, 74-77, 156-59, 219-20, 376-83; "Manuscrits français," No. 14,294, fols. 266-67.

<sup>129</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 258, 304; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 516-17, 830-31; Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 63-66; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 257-60; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 498-99.

The real measure of the success of the new industry may be seen in the fact that its dependence on Italian workers was a thing of the past. In September, 1672, Colbert received word, from the comte d'Avaux, of an Italian mirror-maker who was willing to come to France. Colbert replied to the ambassador that there was no need for the worker to come, unless he was prepared to make mirrors over 40 inches high, that is, larger in size than those being made by the *manufacture royale*. He wrote d'Avaux again on January 6, 1673, that he would grant privileges to Italian workers only for the manufacture of mirrors more than 40 inches high. He explained to the ambassador that France no longer had anything to fear from the Venetian mirror-makers, it "being certain that our mirrors are more perfect than those which are made in that city." On the other hand Colbert, in 1672, was ready to welcome a Venetian worker who claimed to have a secret method of polishing mirrors, provided that he did not wish for a privilege which would interfere with the people already polishing mirrors in France. A decade later the first official schedule of prices published by the company showed that it was charging more for small mirrors, less for large mirrors, than Venice. The company's price for a mirror 10 inches by 10 inches was 9 *livres*, for one 20 by 20 it was 24 *livres*, for one 30 by 30 it was 70 *livres*.<sup>130</sup>

*Summary.*—By 1680 Colbert was able to boast that the French mirror manufacture was depriving Venice of 1,000,000 *livres* a year. But as late as April, 1682, he was still inquiring about conditions in the mirror business at Venice, though by that time the inquiry may have been merely a matter of habit. The company was, however, at the time of Colbert's death, not in the most prosperous condition. Du Noyer had been forced out of the directorship and had died in 1679. The other members of the company were worrying about the debts it had contracted, to the extent of 50,000 *livres*, and about the approaching expiration of its privilege in 1685. But the latter worry was removed a few months after Colbert's death, when on December 31, 1683, on the advice of Louvois and in answer to a petition of the company, the king renewed its privilege for a period of 30 years. Of all the enterprises founded by Colbert, the *manufacture royale* of mirrors was destined to achieve the longest unbroken existence. It was reorganized several times, and had its privilege renewed several times before the Revolution. In

<sup>130</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 529, note 1, 660-61, 672; Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 67-68, 196.

1830 it was transformed into a modern corporation, and as the *Compagnie de Saint-Gobain* it is still an important factor in the industrial life of France.<sup>131</sup>

*Glass and earthenware.*—It was not in the manufacture of mirrors alone that the glass industry made progress in France under Colbert. Privileges for glassmaking were rare in the period, since the production of ordinary glass was well established in the hands of gentlemen glassmakers and others. But these manufactures were aided by being allowed to purchase wood at cut rates, from the royal forests, and by moderate tariff duties. The tariff of 1664 levied an import tax of 2 *livres* for each 4 baskets of sheet glass, one *livre* per hundredweight for drinking glasses except those from Venice, and 10 *livres* per hundredweight for glasses, cups, basins, and other objects in Venetian crystal glass. The rates were not altered by the tariff of 1667.<sup>132</sup>

One series of glass enterprises connected with two men, Jean Castellan (Giovanni Castellano) and his nephew Bernard Perrot (Bernardo Perotti), did benefit by the grant of special royal privileges. Early in the seventeenth century an Italian named Ponte (or Ponti) had founded glassworks at Nevers. The enterprise had not been permanently successful, but the idea had been taken up by his brother-in-law, Jean Castellan. In 1647 Marie de Gonzagua (the Gonzaguas were dukes of Nevers as well as of Mantua) had recommended Castellan to the *échevins* of Nevers. Castellan began making glass products and in 1656 he was confirmed in his right to manufacture glass at Nevers by Anne de Gonzagua. In 1661, through the good offices of Mazarin to whom he had sent a case of glasses as a present, Castellan secured a grant of privileges from the king. Royal letters patent of April 20, 1661, gave him for 30 years a monopoly of the right to furnish with crystal glassware cities situated on the Loire or its tributaries, from Nevers to Poitiers. This grant enraged the glassmakers of Paris, especially Eustache le Maréchal, whose father had started glassworks there under Henry IV. The Parisians were able to get the *Parlement* of Paris to refuse to register the letters patent.<sup>133</sup>

But Castellan, in his dealings with Mazarin, had corresponded with Colbert, and through the aid of the minister he was able to defeat the

<sup>131</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 122; "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fol. 28; Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 68 ff.

<sup>132</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 154; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* of 1693.

<sup>133</sup> Bondonis, "Les Verreries nivernaises et orléanaises au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Jean Castellan et Bernard Perrot, 1647-1709," pp. 76-77.

machinations of the Parisians. From that time on, Colbert and Castellan were in touch with each other, and each derived benefit from the contact. In 1663 Castellan despatched to Colbert a present of glasses, and when they were smashed through the carelessness of a carter, he sent the minister another gift of glassware. He asked Colbert to accept the offering "as marks of the obligation which I owe you and in recognition of the kindnesses which you have shown me." A year later, in August, 1664, Castellan found himself overstocked with goods and short of cash. In these straits he appealed to Colbert for a loan of 3,000 *livres*, to enable him to continue his business. Nor did he ask in vain, for Colbert seems to have granted the request.<sup>134</sup>

In 1665 Castellan showed his gratitude by laboring to secure Italian workers for the new mirror manufacture. His son-in-law, Marc de Borniol, actually journeyed to Venice and brought back to France a group of mirror-makers. Castellan's efforts were rewarded on September 30, 1665, by royal letters patent confirming his privileges. This new grant told of the letters patent of 1661, of the difficulties in securing their registration, and of the objections raised by Eustache le Maréchal. In particular, Le Maréchal had objected and was objecting to the sale of Castellan's crystal glassware in Paris. To clear the matter up, the king, in the new letters patent, upheld all Castellan's rights and gave him permission to sell his wares in Paris, any provisions of Le Maréchal's privilege to the contrary notwithstanding.<sup>135</sup>

Castellan's glassworks continued to grow and prosper, favored as they were by the central government. In September, 1671, Castellan heard the rumor that certain entrepreneurs were seeking to secure a royal privilege to set up a glass manufacture at Orléans. Once more he appealed to Colbert, pointing out that no more glassworks were needed and that the creation of any at Orléans "would be against my privileges and the decrees which you had the goodness to trouble yourself to let me have, and would be my total ruin, and would destroy my trade and that of my nephew." Colbert seems to have stood by Castellan again, and the enterprise of this Italian continued to prosper.

<sup>134</sup> Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 77-79; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 116, fol. 302.

<sup>135</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 26 ff.; Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 79-81 (Bondoïs gives the impression that the Venetian workers were brought in for Castellan's own glass factory. In reality they were destined for the mirror manufacture in the faubourg Saint-Antoine); Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 344, doc. 109; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,733, fols. 146-49.

After his death it was continued, in the hands of members of his family, far down into the eighteenth century.<sup>136</sup>

Even more important than the work of Castellan was that of the nephew whom he mentioned in the letter to Colbert in 1671. This nephew was named Bernard Perrot. For some years he worked in his uncle's establishment. But in 1662 he decided to organize his own glassworks at Orléans. Royal letters patent of July 13, 1662, granted Perrot the necessary privilege. In addition, he secured a privilege from Philippe, duc d'Orléans, and brother of the king, and authorization from his own uncle, who held exclusive rights in the Loire district.

Perrot was an experimenter, anxious to develop new processes and techniques in glassmaking. His first researches seem to have been in connection with fuel, a matter which was always a problem for the glass industry. In September, 1666, he secured by royal letters patent an exclusive privilege for the manufacture of a kind of earth for burning, which was superior to coal, since it had no smoke nor bad odor. In the letters patent Perrot was styled a gentleman, and it was provided that his activity in manufacturing the new fuel should not impair his status as such. Furthermore, he was granted naturalization, and the right to place the royal arms on his establishments. In December, 1666, Perrot secured from the king a new glassmaking privilege, which was to extend for thirty years, provided he used "earth-fire" (*feu de terre*) in his manufacturing. The phrase "earth-fire" seems to indicate either that he had succeeded in applying his new invention to glassmaking, or, less probably, that he was planning to use coal in his glassworks.<sup>137</sup>

In 1668 Perrot secured another special privilege for a new invention. Royal letters patent of December 7 of that year gave him the exclusive right to exploit "two beautiful and rare secrets which might be both useful and curious, namely that of dyeing glass red, transparent within and in its substance, an invention which seems to have been in use among the ancients, but to have been lost and not found again up till now; the other is to make a rich enamel on panes and columns of copper or on such other forms as he may wish, with all sorts of colors and figures, which can be used to make tables, cabinets, caskets, even to floor rooms and cabinets, and for other works of a

<sup>136</sup> Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 81-83; "Collection Clairambault," No. 793, fol. 97.

<sup>137</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 262-63; Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 83-84; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 342, doc. 101.

very rare nature." No one else was to imitate Perrot's products, but he, in turn, was not to interfere with the coloring of glass or the manufacture of enamel by established processes. On September 28, 1669, the duc d'Orléans confirmed this grant for his appanage of Orléans, and appointed Perrot his glassmaker, with the right to use the ducal arms as well as those of the king.<sup>138</sup>

In 1671, when Mazzolar, who had been involved in the mirror manufacture, planned to establish glassworks of his own at Orléans, Perrot was able to thwart the attempt by appealing to the duc d'Orléans, and through his uncle to Colbert. Two years later, after a fire had partially destroyed his plant, Perrot secured by royal letters patent of February 28, 1673, a confirmation of his various privileges and their prolongation to 1693. On April 22, 1673, Perrot received by new royal letters patent a privilege for a still more significant invention. The privilege declared that he had discovered how "by a means hitherto unknown" to "cast glass in plates (*couler le cristal en tables*) as is done with metals, giving to it whatever color is desired." He could also "render these plates hollow in the manner of cameos, and represent there portraits, engrave there letters and all sorts of figures, as well as make all sorts of bas-reliefs, cornices, and moldings."

This invention, which seems to have included not only the casting of glass plates but also the production of something like what is called *Ueberfangglas*, was of capital importance. Hitherto, in making plates of perfect glass for mirrors, and so forth, it had been first necessary to blow the glass into cylinders, then flatten out and straighten the cylinders. Perrot's invention, which he is said to have hit upon by watching some molten glass falling upon an iron band, was much more efficient, and made it possible to produce much longer sheets of perfect glass. In the closing years of the century the invention was applied by a new company, formed to make big mirrors. This company was absorbed into the original royal mirror company in 1695. But Perrot's claim to an inventor's rights was recognized, and the company was forced to pay him a pension.<sup>139</sup>

While such progress was being made in the manufacture of glass, some advances were made also in the production of various sorts of

<sup>138</sup> Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, p. 263; Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 84-85.

<sup>139</sup> Bondoïs, "Les Verreries nivernaises," pp. 86 ff.; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 344, doc. 110; Frémy, *La Manufacture royale des glaces*, pp. 263 ff., 383-86, 77 ff.

earthenware, crockery, and china. From Nevers, in 1663, an illiterate entrepreneur, who was probably an Italian, wrote to Colbert asking for help in his efforts to establish a *faïence* manufacture there. The next year an important privilege was granted for the establishment of a manufacture of *faïence* and of an imitation porcelain which was termed "as beautiful as, or more beautiful than, that which comes from the East Indies." The letters patent which granted the privilege were in favor of Claude Reverend and were dated April 21, 1664. They gave him a monopoly for thirty years of the special processes which he had invented for the manufacture of *faïence* and porcelain. It was forbidden to make similar establishments within thirty leagues of Paris. Reverend eventually established his plant at Saint-Cloud, but he seems to have produced only *faïence* ware.<sup>140</sup>

In 1668 letters patent of the month of June granted to Abraham Poocq, a Dutchman, a privilege for the manufacture of *faïence*, both white and brown, decorated with enamel of all colors. The privilege was to run for twenty years and it was to be exclusive only for Vexin, though Poocq was to have the right to sell his wares all over France. The entrepreneur was granted naturalization, and exemptions for himself and for his workers. But he was forbidden to interfere with any existing establishments. Another similar privilege was granted by letters patent of October 31, 1673, to Louis Poterat. It gave him the right to establish at Rouen or elsewhere "a manufacture of all sorts of vessels, pots, or vases of porcelain similar to those of China, and of violet *faïence*, painted with white and blue or with other colors" in the Dutch style. The privilege was to run for thirty years and was to be exclusive for all Normandy. But Poterat was to have the right to sell his products in all parts of France. The establishment of Poterat achieved considerable success and endured for many years.<sup>141</sup>

By 1679 Colbert felt that the manufacture of *faïence* was so well established in France that there was no further need to grant privileges of an exclusive nature. When one of his correspondents wrote him proposing that such a privilege be given to an entrepreneur who wished to start a *faïence* manufacture, Colbert replied, in a letter dated February 10:

<sup>140</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 117, fols. 471-72; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 260; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 343, doc. 106.

<sup>141</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 343-44, docs. 105, 107; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 260.



I should tell you that the king is extremely reluctant to grant exclusive privileges of this sort, especially for manufactures which are established in the kingdom, and so do what you can to oblige the person who proposes to establish it, to do so without a privilege or exclusive rights.<sup>142</sup>

But on May 25 of the same year the intendant at Grenoble, who seems not to have been informed of Colbert's views, wrote to the minister, apparently in regard to the same entrepreneur. He reported that a manufacture of *faïence* had been recently established and was already turning out vases nearly as fine as those of Nevers. The entrepreneur was anxious to secure the exclusive right to manufacture *faïence* in the province, so as to indemnify himself for the expenses of building the furnaces and getting the enterprise started. The intendant seems to have considered the request entirely reasonable.<sup>143</sup>

It was the eighteenth century that was to see the real glory of the glass, china, porcelain, and earthenware industries in France. But progress was made in the period of Colbert, and the foundations were laid on which the next century was to build.

#### 4. METALS AND METAL PRODUCTS

*Tin plate.*—In general, Colbert did not interest himself so deeply in the production of metal and metal goods as he did in the manufacture of textiles or luxury articles. But there were some aspects of the metal industries that stirred him deeply. His work in connection with the mines of France was persistent and enthusiastic. But it will be treated in Chapter XIII rather than at this point. His efforts in behalf of the manufacture of tin plate, however, may appropriately be treated in this section. In the time of Mazarin and earlier, unsuccessful attempts had been made to introduce the production of tin plate into France. Colbert was merely following out the same line of endeavor, and though he spent much time and thought on the matter, he achieved no permanent success. On the whole, Colbert's scheme for tin plate were not unlike those he pushed through in connection with mirrors. In both cases it was necessary to secure skilled workers from abroad, and in both cases a centralized, privileged enterprise was established.

As early as 1663 Colbert took note of the importation of tin plate (*fer-blanc*) from Germany, and took the stand that it was necessary to secure workers from there to establish the industry in France "at

<sup>142</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 149.

<sup>143</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 443-44.

whatever price it may cost." He was sure that tin plate could be made in France, and was aware of the fact that it had been produced there at one time or another in the years that preceded his advent to power. In the first months of 1665, as a result of Colbert's efforts, plans were laid for the establishment of a tin-plate manufacture, and in February of that year a royal edict was issued on the matter. The edict began by telling of the king's efforts in behalf of industry and commerce. It explained that to be prosperous, France must get along without foreign products, and it declared that Colbert had been seeking "with much application all those who have acquired the reputation for excelling in, and having some special knowledge or secret for manufactures."<sup>144</sup>

The edict went on to relate that the sieur Le Vau, architect of the king, having some knowledge of how tin plate was made, had in the years following 1650 made attempts to establish the industry in France. He had had furnaces and forges constructed in the forest of Conches, in Normandy. For three years Le Vau had had work carried on there, under the supervision of a certain Antoine Champion. So great were the efforts of Le Vau and Champion that they would certainly have succeeded in making better tin plate than the Germans, had not war intervened to interrupt their enterprise. When peace came Le Vau was kept busy working on the Louvre and other royal buildings and had no time for tin plate. Le Vau had proposed, however, that Champion be given a privilege, so that he might reestablish the manufacture, and Colbert had approved the proposal.

The edict, therefore, gave Champion the right to establish a manufacture of tin plate in Nivernais or elsewhere in France. He was to produce the tin plate in sheets (*feuilles*) of the same size as those made in Germany, or of any other sizes suitable for use in roofing, making kitchen utensils, and so forth. The privilege was to run for thirty years and it was to be exclusive for all France. All previous privileges were revoked. Champion was to have the right to take over any places, forges, or furnaces, that he might need, especially in Nivernais, but he was to indemnify the proprietors. Similarly, he was to be allowed to get such iron as he needed from any mines, if he indemnified the owners. No person was to divert water which Champion might need.

<sup>144</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, cclx; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,788, fols. 342-47, for a copy of the edict; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 346-47, doc. 117, for a summary of the edict.

Since Champion would require a great number of foreign workers, special provision was made for them in the edict. All foreigners were to secure automatic naturalization after eight years in his service. If any died before that term was up, their heirs might inherit their property peaceably. All workmen in the two chief establishments to be created by Champion, together with the craftsmen necessary to minister to their wants and to the needs of the plant, were to be free of the *taille* and all other taxes, dues, and duties. Champion's enterprise was to be known as the *Manufacture Royale de Fer Blanc*. Its products were to be free of all customs and transport duties within France. If exported, they were to pay only the nominal duty of 30 *sous* the barrel of 300 single sheets. Cases and barrels containing the products of the manufacture were to bear a special mark to be assigned it by Colbert. Tin and chemicals used in making the products were to pay no customs or transport duties. The persons transporting goods for the company, and boats and carts employed therefor, were to be permitted to bear the royal arms and colors.

After the privilege had run for 20 years, Champion was to be held, under penalty of forfeiture of his privileges, to teach the secrets of the manufacture of tin plate to 10 of his chief workers to be chosen by Colbert, or by his successor as Superintendent of Buildings. But the workers so instructed were to be required to work for Champion 10 years more. To aid in starting the manufacture, the king was to advance Champion 60,000 *livres*, as a loan without interest, for the purchase of land, forges, and so forth. One-half of the loan was to be repaid at the end of 6 years. The other half, the king was to leave in the entrepreneur's hands. But in return, Champion was to be bound to turn out 3,000 barrels of 300 sheets each in 1665, 8,000 barrels in 1666, and 12,000 barrels in 1667. Thereafter he was to produce whatever amount was needed in France. At the end of 20 years Champion was to be given the hereditary status of a noble. He was to have the right to take associates, who if they were nobles would suffer no impairment thereby. To Champion was given the right of *committimus*. Persons who violated the exclusive privileges of Champion were to be liable to a fine of 20,000 *livres* and confiscation of the goods involved. The various provisions of the edict were confirmed and enforced by royal letters patent of the same month, February, 1665.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,789, fols. 342-47, 348-58.

The 60,000 *livres* promised by the king were paid over promptly, and before many months were out Colbert was busily seeking German workers for the enterprise and telling his trusty agent, Daliez de la Tour, to keep an eye on the development of the venture. On August 6, 1665, the abbé Gravel, French diplomatic agent in Germany, reported to Colbert from Ratisbon that it was going to be very difficult to secure the tin-plate makers that Colbert wanted. The abbé had sent a man to Bohemia in search of such workers. But though there were plenty of journeymen who were willing to migrate to France, the masters, who alone knew the secrets of the art, were jealously anxious to preserve them, and too rich and satisfied with their lot to wish to move.

On September 3 Gravel reported that he was still seeking a master maker of tin plate, but that he would at least be able to hire a master iron-hammerer and two journeymen. In October he was negotiating with two master tin-plate makers, but they were raising all sorts of objections. Shortly thereafter Colbert wrote Gravel that he had been able to find elsewhere people who knew the secrets of the manufacture of tin plate. Gravel replied on November 12 that he was delighted to hear the news, since the people in Germany were very difficult. On December 17, 1665, he reported that he had had four tin-plate makers ready to go to France, but that they had commenced to make trouble, insisting that it was against the law for them to do so. It was not until September 8, 1668, that Gravel at length reported success. On that date he wrote to Colbert to announce that through a man named Crafft he had secured the services of two famous Saxon tin-plate makers.<sup>146</sup>

Meanwhile the tin-plate manufacture was undergoing a variety of vicissitudes in France. Champion had started out with much in his favor and had begun work on a tin-plate plant at Beaumont, in Nivernais. But before the autumn of 1666 he had become discouraged and had given up the enterprise. A decree of the Council of State of November 10, 1666, declared that since Champion seemed "to have abandoned his position," it was necessary to appoint a successor who had "the necessary experience, ability and knowledge." Antoine Picquet had offered his services, and, since he was "no less capable" than Champion, the decree divested the former entrepreneur of all his rights and privileges and turned them over to Picquet, together with

<sup>146</sup> Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 60; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fols. 203, 328-29; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 740-41.

the plants that had been established. All the workers employed in the new manufacture were ordered to obey Picquet.<sup>147</sup>

In the spring of 1667 Picquet was actually in charge of the tin-plate plant and had it producing, for a decree of the Council of State upheld him in his rights. It seems that Picquet had "sent down the Loire to Nantes a number of barrels of tin plate." Despite his privileges, certain tax farmers had sought to collect tolls and duties on these goods and had even seized the barrels, though they were shown a copy of the edict exempting the tin plate from such exactions. The decree ordered the tax farmers to desist from any attempt to collect duties on Picquet's tin plate. A *mémoire* dated August 20, 1667, indicates, however, that Picquet soon encountered other troubles. It explained that 350,000 *livres* had been expended on the tin-plate works, that seven forges and a plating plant had been completed, that of these, four forges and the plating plant were equipped with workers both French and German, were supplied with materials, and were all ready to operate, but that financial aid would be necessary to set them going. It suggested that a company should be formed to finance the enterprise and that money should be advanced to it, by way of assistance.<sup>148</sup>

By the end of 1667 the venture was in such a bad way that Picquet retired from it and left Colbert to find new ways and devices to support the tin-plate plant. Colbert persuaded a certain Daniel Prondre to undertake the work. By a decree of December 22, 1667, Prondre was vested with all the rights and privileges which had been held successively by Champion and Picquet. During the course of the year 1668, Prondre and his associates put 240,000 *livres* into the enterprise. But Colbert was apparently not satisfied with the prospects of the company, for in the fall of 1668 he devised a new method for helping it. On October 31 he gave to François Le Gendre the contract for six years for the farm of the taxes of the "five big farms," the *gabelles*, the *aides*, and other levies. The contract called for payments by Le Gendre to the king of 39,000,000 *livres* the first year, and 40,000,000 *livres* for the last five years. But Colbert awarded the contract to Le Gendre only on condition that he support and keep up the tin-plate manufacture.

<sup>147</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,789, fol. 359.

<sup>148</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,789, fols. 359-62; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 360-61, doc. 162.

Once Prondre heard of this arrangement, he asked to be discharged of all his obligations in connection with the tin-plate venture and to be reimbursed for the 240,000 *livres* that he had put into the manufacture. When approached on the matter, Le Gendre agreed to pay a sum of money each year to be relieved of responsibility for the tin-plate plant, since he felt that the collection of the taxes would give him enough to do. The matter was laid before the Council of Commerce, which found Le Gendre's stand reasonable, and began to search for someone to replace Prondre, and pay him off. Meanwhile, in January and February, 1669, Le Gendre put in 16,000 *livres* to keep the tin-plate manufacture going.

At length a certain Jean Cortinel presented himself and offered to take over the enterprise. If Le Gendre would pay Prondre 226,000 *livres* and leave in the business the 16,000 *livres* he had invested in it, Cortinel was willing to pay Prondre the remaining 14,000 *livres* due him. If, further, the whole tin-plate manufacture was turned over to him, together with all the rights and privileges vested successively in Champion, Picquet, and Prondre, Cortinel was willing to undertake to keep up and develop the industry, though he was not willing to bind himself to produce any fixed quantity of tin plate per year. Le Gendre seems to have acceded to these terms, and Colbert approved them in his report to the Council of Commerce. The Council, therefore, on March 21, 1669, issued a decree embodying Cortinel's suggestions and putting him in charge of the tin-plate manufacture.<sup>140</sup>

Shortly after this reorganization of the tin-plate manufacture had been effected, Colbert sent Daliez de la Tour to the plant at Beaumont to inspect it and to improve conditions there. On April 16, 1669, Daliez reported that the tin-plate works were in a terrible condition. The workers were lazy, inefficient, and costly. The tin plate was badly made, and the cost of production was too high—300 *livres* a barrel. Daliez suggested that the new workers who were being sought in Germany should be good masters, as there were enough journeymen at Beaumont. Five days later Daliez wrote, in a more optimistic vein, of the reforms he was inaugurating at the plant. He had put the German workers on a piece-work basis, paying them according to their output, and to prevent waste he had limited the amount of coal and iron they were to be allowed as raw materials. To bring the French

<sup>140</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 157-59.

workers up to the mark, Daliez had set an inspector over them, with authority to reduce their wages if they were tardy or inefficient.<sup>150</sup>

On June 7, 1669, Daliez de la Tour wrote that there had been great improvement at the tin-plate works since he had taken hold. Things must have been humming at Beaumont, for Daliez reported that the sieur de Closanges, whom he had placed in the plant as an agent, and also M. Legoux, one of the *intéressés*, had fallen ill from overwork and from the bad air of the district. So interested had Daliez become in the tin-plate industry that he had thought of starting some plants of his own. But Colbert discouraged the idea.<sup>151</sup>

During 1669 Colbert made new efforts to get tin-plate makers from Germany, using as his intermediary this time Chassan, the French minister-resident at Dresden. Chassan acted in concert with a certain sieur Vernoës, who went into the mountains of Saxony to secure the workers. By June he had secured one batch and gone back secretly to hire another. Colbert promised that the first lot would be treated so well in France that the task of Vernoës would be lighter the second time. In October Vernoës was still engaged in the same mission. But some trouble had arisen between Chassan and Vernoës. The latter was acting independently and was causing anxiety by his undiplomatic handling of the affair.<sup>152</sup>

Meanwhile, by June, 1669, the reorganization of the tin-plate venture had been completed. A company had been formed in which Cortinel seems to have been the leading figure and of which Legoux was probably a member. But the active management of the business, and the titular proprietorship of the privileges granted by the edict of February, 1665, seem to have been vested in the architect Le Vau, who had worked at the manufacture of tin plate back in the 1650's. It had been arranged by Colbert that Le Vau's associates were to bear the financial burdens connected with the business. To assist him further, Colbert had secured for him advances of money from royal funds and had apparently agreed to buy some of the tin plate produced, in behalf of the king, perhaps for the purpose of roofing some of the royal dwellings. Yet in October, 1669, all was not well, for on the twenty-sixth of that month Colbert wrote Le Vau a letter which was

<sup>150</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 726-27; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 364, doc. 176.

<sup>151</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 153, fols. 196-98.

<sup>152</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 292-93, docs. 6 and 7.

couched in the sternest tone. "I have not written you," declared the minister, "with the intention of mortifying you, but only to let you know the obligation under which you lie of making the manufacture of tin plate succeed." He then summarized the steps he had taken to aid Le Vau, and pointed out that despite all this help, the king had as yet received no tin plate. "You see that this is impossible," Colbert concluded flatly, and urged Le Vau to work hard to make the tin-plate plant a success.<sup>153</sup>

Colbert's ingenious persistence in devising methods for supporting the tin-plate enterprise reaped a certain reward, for it continued, if not in prosperity, at least in existence, for a long while. Le Vau died in 1670. Perhaps he, too, had been affected by overwork or bad air. But Cortinel continued to head the business for many years. A decree of the Council of State of November 18, 1679, indicates something of the state of the venture at that period, as well as of the kind of support it continued to receive from the state.

In 1679 Cortinel appealed to Colbert, or perhaps directly to the Council of State, for help. He pointed out the great efforts and expenditures he had made to build up the manufacture of tin plate. He explained that he was suffering from foreign competition. The tariff of 1664 had levied an import duty on tin plate of 15 *livres* per barrel of double sheets. By the tariff of 1667 the duties had been doubled. This step according to Cortinel, had "diminished the trade in foreign tin plate only in the heat of the enforcement [*dans la chaleur de l'exécution*] of the abovementioned declaration." Gradually the enforcement of the prescribed duties came to be neglected. Cortinel further claimed that the foreigners, seeing him succeed, "resolved to decrease the price of sheet tin plate which they send into the kingdom, so as to hinder the sale of that which he was having made," and which experience had shown to be better than the foreign product. The decrease in price engineered by the foreigners made it impossible for Cortinel to sell the tin plate he had manufactured "for the use of the public," and worked great injury to him, since he had many barrels of tin plate stored up in Nivernais, in Paris, and in Lyon.

Cortinel asked for no increase in duties, but simply for the rigid enforcement of those established in 1667. He complained that these duties were not "collected exactly" by the agents of the farmers of the

<sup>153</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 153, fols. 196-98; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 493-94.



"five big farms" and of the *douane de Lyon*. Furthermore, he declared that the inhabitants of Lyon bought tin plate in Germany and brought it in during the time of the fairs so as to exempt it from duties, and that foreign merchants smuggled tin plate into France through the smaller customs offices, where Cortinel could not afford to keep agents. In response to Cortinel's plea, the Council of State ordered, on November 18, 1679, that the provisions of the tariff of 1667 should be strictly enforced, that tin plate brought to Lyon should pay the full duty, even in fair time, and that tin plate should be imported only through the customs offices at Rouen, Bordeaux, Châlons, and Seyssel.<sup>154</sup>

Despite such aid from the state, the manufacture of tin plate, so zealously nurtured by Colbert, did not long outlast that minister. A decree of July 3, 1692, cutting the duties on tin plate by a third, probably indicates a declining production, or possibly even its cessation. In 1720, when letters patent for a new tin-plate manufacture were granted, the king was informed that there was no tin plate being made in France.<sup>155</sup>

*Other metal products.*—The problems in other phases of the metal industries were somewhat different from those which arose in connection with the manufacture of tin plate. The production and working of iron were, for instance, well established in France before Colbert came to power. It has been estimated that in 1660 there were 500 iron forges in France, although most of them were small and in the hands of local proprietors. But even in the matter of iron production Colbert displayed considerable interest. He himself was the proprietor of an iron forge and furnace, in which he took great pride. Only three months before his death, Colbert wrote to one of his agents to ask for news of the forge and furnace and to urge him to keep them in good condition.<sup>156</sup>

Colbert had, however, interests in the iron industry that were other than personal. From the point of view of state finances and the regulation of industry, the *droit domanial* collected for the marking of iron and steel had a certain importance. Under Colbert, efforts were made to enforce the levy with greater exactitude, and a decree of Jan-

<sup>154</sup> AD XI, No. 35, *liasse* 1, doc. 14.

<sup>155</sup> F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* of 1693 on tariffs; AD XI, No. 45, *liasse* 6, letters patent of September 14, 1720.

<sup>156</sup> Boissonnade, *Le socialisme d'état*, pp. 223-24, 232-33; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 747; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 207-8.

uary 18, 1663, laid down stringent regulations in this connection. All proprietors of forges were, for example, required to declare their output of iron and steel to the farmer of the *droit domanial*.<sup>157</sup>

More important was Colbert's anxiety to increase the iron production of France. He was envious of the iron works of Spain, Sweden, and Holland. He was distressed by the fact that France imported foreign iron. To an intendant he wrote in 1666, "It is certain that the iron of some of our provinces is as good as that from without, and it is ridiculous that we should go to seek abroad what we have in abundance at home." Colbert was glad to authorize the creation of new forges, and though they were subject to regulations, theoretically stringent, as to the use of wood and water, they were given privileges with regard to use of wood that were of some importance. State orders for iron, especially for the use of the navy, were another means of encouragement. In 1677 the naval arsenals contained 500 tons of iron in various forms and 2½ tons of nails. Then, too, French iron producers were protected by import duties on foreign metal. The tariff of 1664 fixed rates varying from 5 *sous* the hundredweight on scrap iron to 3 *livres* the hundredweight on iron in rods.<sup>158</sup>

As early as 1663 Colbert was worrying about the manufacture of steel. He was distressed that 384,222 pounds of it, costing some 192,000 *livres*, had been imported into France in the previous year, and he was making plans to remedy the situation. In October, 1668, an edict was issued granting a 20-year privilege to Antoine Prévry, bourgeois of Paris, for the establishment at Paris or elsewhere of furnaces for the making of steel. Prévry was given permission to sell his products anywhere in France, and exemption from the lodging of soldiers. In 1672 Colbert was corresponding with Villeroy, archbishop of Lyon, in regard to a furnace for making steel, established at Neuville by that ecclesiastic. It had produced 150 hundredweight of steel between Easter and mid-July, and Colbert remarked that if its output could be raised to 100 tons a year it would be a success. He promised to renew the privilege of the sieur Dessessarts, whom Villeroy had put in charge of it. In 1681 a more ambitious project was afoot, for on March 18 of that year a privilege for the manufacture of steel was granted to the sieur de Charagnac, on condition that he pay the king 60,000 *livres* for each

<sup>157</sup> AD XI, No. 35, *liasse* 1, doc. 11.

<sup>158</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 150-54; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* of 1693 on tariffs.

1,000,000 pounds of steel produced, and the duc d'Orleans 100,000 *livres* a year.<sup>159</sup>

The manufacture of wire also attracted Colbert's attention. In 1663 he noted that the amount of brass and iron wire imported into France in the previous year had been 440,000 pounds, worth 220,000 *livres*. "It is necessary," he remarked, "to work to establish and to increase this manufacture, to prevent such a great quantity from coming in." On August 11, 1668, letters patent were issued, granting to Pierre Popelin, bourgeois of Paris, and his associates a privilege for the manufacture of iron wire. Popelin had already established wire works in Perche, which were producing wire held to be better than that made in England or Germany. The letters patent gave him the right to set up similar works anywhere in France and granted him, his associates, and his employees tax exemptions and freedom from the lodging of soldiers.<sup>160</sup>

In the manufacture of brass and copper, there was also considerable activity, under stimulation from Colbert. On May 14, 1666, Pierre Gargand, sieur de Manjoux, wrote to Colbert from Châlons to say that he had secured a master brass founder from Stollberg, in Germany. He had done so at the risk of his life, for the people there were very strict about not letting workers be hired to go to France. On October 25 of the same year a privilege was granted to Gargand, by royal letters patent. He was given the right to establish foundries and hammering plants at or near Châlons and Reims for the production of cauldrons, kettles, and other objects of copper and of beaten brass. He was to be allowed to take what land he needed, provided that he indemnified the proprietors. For 20 years he was to have the exclusive right to make such products in Champagne and in the adjacent areas which had been recently added to France. All previous privileges and grants which might conflict with the new one were revoked, "provided, however, that these privileges have not been carried out and are not at present existing and working." Gargand was further given exemption from import duties on copper and calamine for use at his own plant, to the extent of 100,000 pounds of each. To help the entrepreneur to secure raw material, the export of scrap metal from Champagne was forbidden. Gargand and his employees were to be exempt from municipal

<sup>159</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cclix; II<sup>2</sup>, 660; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 345-46, docs. 114, 115.

<sup>160</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cclx; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 346, doc. 116.

taxes and duties and from the lodging of soldiers. Those of his workers who had not previously paid the *taille* were to be exempt therefrom. But if Gargand did not establish his works at Reims and at Châlons before the end of 1667, his privilege was to be void.<sup>161</sup>

Gargand seems to have established his plants as he was supposed to do, for in 1668 he was writing to Colbert for protection and aid. He complained that the master cauldron-makers of Troyes were hampering his work, and that the merchants were conspiring to sell their wares at lower prices than those he charged. More serious was the threat to his monopoly from a certain sieur Laplace, who had come from Charleville to reestablish at Poix old foundries which had been abandoned and of which the privilege had expired. By April 5, 1669, Gargand had solved the problem of Laplace by forming a partnership with him. On that date Gargand wrote Colbert that he was trying to secure from the Spanish authorities the right to get calamine at Namur. He asked the minister to extend the prohibition against the export of scrap metal so as to include the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. He reported that he and Laplace were turning out high quality products, but that they were having difficulty in finding a market for them, "there coming a frightful quantity of kettles and the like [*chaudronnerie*] from Aix, and the French merchants using them to harm us and destroy us gradually."<sup>162</sup>

An enterprise like that of Gargand, but in a different province, was granted a privilege in January, 1667. Royal letters patent were issued, giving to the sieurs Manuel Dies and Daniel Burette the right to establish a manufacture of kettles, wire, and other articles made of red or yellow copper, at Abellencombre, or elsewhere in Normandy. The privilege was to run for 20 years. The entrepreneurs were to be allowed to secure wood from the royal forests on favorable terms. They were to be exempt from the lodging of soldiers. Their foreign employees were to be granted naturalization, and all their workers were to be exempt from taxes, dues, and *tailles*, provided that they were not already on the *taille* rolls. Those workers who had been paying the *taille* were not to be held for larger sums than previously. The entrepreneurs were to be allowed to start a brewery to provide tax-free beer for their workers.

<sup>161</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 786; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 302-4; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,790, fols. 6-8; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 345, doc. 112.

<sup>162</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 344-45, docs. 111, 113.

Each year Dies and Burette were to have the right to import 30,000 pounds of calamine and 30,000 pounds of scrap metal, free of all duties. To prevent any shortage of scrap metal, an export duty of 6 *livres* the hundredweight was placed on it. The products of the plant were to be free of all customs or transport duties anywhere in France. Nobles associating themselves with the venture were not to be subject to any impairment of status therefor. But in return for all these privileges, the entrepreneurs were to have 4 plants in operation within 4 years, under penalty of losing their privilege.<sup>163</sup>

The entrepreneurs made strenuous efforts to start their manufacture, but they encountered numerous difficulties. On November 28, 1668, Dies wrote to Colbert to tell him of the situation. He reminded Colbert that some two years ago the minister had secured and sent to him a grant of "very favorable privilege." Since the beginning of 1667 Dies had worked hard, hoping to make the enterprise succeed, though others had failed in similar ventures, and expecting to secure some return for his labor and his expenditures. Despite all prohibitions, he had secured workers from Germany, who taught him much in regard to copper manufacturing, although he had had to pay dear for his knowledge. Mills and furnaces had been built. But when all this had been done, Dies declared, "I recognized that I had taken false steps, and that instead of continuing to strengthen this manufacture, I should stop so as to avoid ruin."

The chief source of Dies' troubles had to do with the actions of Burette and another man, named Dupont. While Dies was away in Paris, these two had spent excessive sums, stolen goods, and thrown the whole enterprise into great disorder, he declared. So serious was the situation that Dies had begun to realize that the most promising enterprise might fail miserably. Yet it seemed to him too bad that Burette and Dupont should ruin the venture. Knowing that Colbert was interested in such manufactures, Dies appealed to him for help. He asked that Colbert direct either the *lieutenant-général* or M. Fernel to spare a few hours' time to remedy the disorders caused by Burette and Dupont. Were this done, he hoped to be able to strengthen and build up his establishment.<sup>164</sup>

Closely related to such enterprises as those discussed in the metal industries were others for the manufacture of guns, cannon anchors, and

<sup>163</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 315-19.

<sup>164</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 149, fols. 669-70.

munitions, in which Colbert took great interest. But they may be more appositely treated in the next section.

### 5. NAVAL SUPPLIES AND MUNITIONS

In the matter of procuring supplies of various sorts for the navy, Colbert was involved in a variety of ways. As the minister responsible for the navy, it was his duty to see that it was at all times adequately equipped with goods of high quality. As the official responsible for the manufactures of France, he was anxious to build up all French industries, including those which catered to the needs of the navy. As an exponent of the mercantilist doctrines, he was desirous of making France self-sufficient in all respects. As the chief financial official, he wished to secure economy in all branches of the royal service.

Sometimes these varied interests were in harmony. But sometimes they were in conflict, as for instance when Colbert found that the goods to be procured in France cost more than those from abroad, or were of inferior quality, or were insufficient in quantity. The creation of the *Compagnie du Nord* by Colbert is a curious example of these conflicts. One of its chief functions was to secure naval stores in the Baltic regions, and all the while Colbert was striving, by building up the naval-supply industries in France, to remove its *raison d'être*.

One of Colbert's basic attitudes on these questions is expressed by a *mémoire* of 1666, in which he said, in regard to supplies for the navy:

It is necessary to observe carefully, on all purchases, that they must always be made in France rather than in foreign countries, even if the goods should be a little inferior in quality and a little more expensive, because when the money does not go out of the kingdom the advantage to the state is double, in that since the money stays in it, it does not grow poor, and the subjects of the king earn their living and use their energy.

For example the 3,000 musket barrels,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and of the caliber of 16 to the pound, ordered in Biscaye, could easily be ordered either in Forez or Nivernais; and it would even be a fine thing to begin to establish the manufacture of them in Angoumois, or in Guienne, or in Brittany.<sup>165</sup>

Shortly before the outbreak of the Dutch war, Colbert compiled a list of the naval manufactures established by him. It shows the variety of products and regions involved, for it included: in Nivernais, iron, tin plate, iron cannon, muskets, musketoons, guns, cutlasses, boarding weapons, anchors, and so forth; in Burgundy, at Boussolles, Drambon,

<sup>165</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>a</sup>, 76-79.

and Perrigny, iron cannon; in Forez, muskets, musketoons, all sorts of arms; at Lyon, cannon of cast iron; in Dauphine, all sorts of arms, swords, hemp, sailcloth, masts, tar, wood for naval construction; in Auvergne, hemp and masts; in Provence, tar and masts; in Vivarais, masts; in Périgord, iron cannon; in Brittany, sailcloth and hemp; in Orléanais, hemp; in Burgundy, wood and hemp; in Médoc, tar; in the Pyrenees, masts, tar, and anchors.<sup>166</sup>

In his divers efforts Colbert met with many disappointments. He was frequently forced to procure naval goods abroad. In 1670, in reference to some iron that had been tested at Boulogne and found inferior, Colbert wrote:

I am well aware that when first I established something new in the kingdom in the way of all the manufactures that are necessary for our navy, they are always found bad in our ports, and often they are bad. For example, it is quite possible that this iron was brittle, or that it was badly made.

But he went on to urge patience. Defects could be corrected. All would come out right in the end. France was capable of making products that were just as good as those of foreign countries.<sup>167</sup>

In attaining his ends, Colbert was just as ready to encourage private initiative as he was to support state intervention. In a *mémoire* drawn up for Seignelay's enlightenment in 1671 Colbert declared:

There is another method to put into practice for securing all the goods for the navy, like hemp, tar, iron of all sorts, sailcloth, wood, masts, and so forth. It would be, every year, after having investigated the just value of all the goods, to fix the price of each so that the merchants would find it somewhat advantageous, and then to let it be known, by public notices in all the cities of the kingdom, that the goods would be paid for at the prices fixed.<sup>168</sup>

Colbert was ever ready to encourage inventions which would help the navy. In 1665, for example, he was interested in a new pendulum clock, for use at sea, invented by Huyghens. The next year he was receiving reports on a new kind of cannon that was lighter than the old type by two-thirds. In 1681 he was ordering tests of a new tar which was impervious to worms and fire. The following year he was directing Duquesne not to make peace with Algiers until he had tried out the new bombs that had been developed.<sup>169</sup>

<sup>166</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 39 ff.; VII, 243 ff.

<sup>167</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 316-17.

<sup>168</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 56-57.

<sup>169</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 127, fol. 423; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 721-22; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 218, 232.

Despite the many disappointments he encountered in his efforts to create and to strengthen naval supply industries, Colbert achieved some measure of success. In a *mémoire* for the king in 1680 the minister could estimate happily that his work along these lines had cost the Dutch some 4,000,000 *livres* a year.<sup>170</sup>

*Anchors, cannon, and munitions.*—One of the articles most necessary for ships was anchors. Before Colbert's time, small anchors had been made in France, but large ones were bought from the Dutch or from other foreigners. Colbert had not been long in office when he turned his attention to this matter. In June, 1665, his trusty agent, Daliez de la Tour, was writing him from Grenoble to report that he had secured an iron forger and had put him to work on the manufacture of large anchors. In August he reported that his forger was turning out iron which was most satisfactory to the navy, and that a new forge, most suitable for the making of big anchors, had been located. Later in the month it developed that the forger was able to make anchors only of 16 to 18 hundredweight. But Daliez announced hopefully that he would keep striving to turn out bigger ones.<sup>171</sup>

The next year Arnoul, intendant of the galleys at Marseille, was working on the production of large anchors. Colbert wrote him an encouraging letter and promised to send him a master forger, who had been imported from Lubeck, and who should be able to perfect the manufacture. On May 4, 1666, Daliez de la Tour reported that he was making progress in the manufacture of anchors. Three years later Daliez wrote Colbert that the anchor production was coming along famously. He hoped to be able to turn out 24 large ones a year. Work had been begun on the anchors for the "Royal Louis," which were to weigh from 5,000 to 6,000 pounds each. With the help of another man, named Chèze (or Chaiz) and supported by Colbert, Daliez was able eventually to set up a successful anchor plant at Cosne, in Nivernais, and 3 at Vienne.<sup>172</sup>

Attempts to set up anchor works in Burgundy and Périgord came to little. But forges were created with some success at Rochefort, Brest, Toulon, and Marseille. To aid in the work, Colbert brought in master

<sup>170</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 122.

<sup>171</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 109, fols. 566-68; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fols. 201-2, 280-81, 441-42.

<sup>172</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>1</sup>, 56-58; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 725, 729-30; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 153, fols. 196-98; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp.



forgers from Sweden and Holland, as well as Lubeck, and paid them handsomely. On February 7, 1670, he wrote to Daliez, to encourage him to build up his plants at Vienne and to start one in Nivernais. In regard to anchors, he declared that it was impossible for him "to resolve to import them from abroad, since we can make in France a quantity sufficient to stock all our storehouses." On September 12 of the same year Colbert sent a letter to Matharel, intendant of the marine at Toulon, urging him to improve the forges there, until they could turn out forty or fifty anchors a year, since he was determined not to buy anchors from Holland. On October 12, 1672, Colbert wrote Daliez to say that while the first anchors he had sent had been so bad as to be almost useless and had been easily broken, the last lot, which had been made by a Dutch master forger provided by the minister, had been found to be well proportioned and well made. But later in the year Colbert was inquiring anxiously of his cousin, Colbert de Terron, as to how the French-made anchors were standing up in actual use.<sup>173</sup>

The bad anchors of which Colbert wrote to Daliez were probably from the forges just started at Cosne. The quality was improved, as Colbert noted, and though the plant, which was termed a *forge royale*, later turned for a while to other types of iron work, it was still successfully making anchors in 1692.<sup>174</sup>

More important than the production of anchors was the manufacture of cannon under Colbert. His enlargement of the navy created a demand for a great number of cannon, and he was determined to secure them, so far as possible, in France. At the same time, Le Tellier and Louvois were earnestly trying to obtain more cannon for the army. The result was that the production of cannon in France grew by leaps and bounds, despite technical and other difficulties. In the 1660's great numbers of cannon were purchased in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, England, and Spain. But as the years passed, France became more and more self-sufficient as regards this prime weapon of warfare.

Under Le Tellier and Louvois, the artillery service of the army was made over from a medieval to a modern branch of administration. Their chief aide was the *lieutenant-général*, Claude Dumetz, a man of vast technical knowledge and the creator of the cannon foundry at Douai. The artillery service for the navy was in the efficient hands of Colbert

<sup>173</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 120-1; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>a</sup>, 212, 270-71, 469-70, 481-82.

<sup>174</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1685, *mémoire* on manufactures of 1693.

and Seignelay. These two sets of administrators competed and coöperated in provisioning France with cannon bought abroad (especially from 1661 to 1669) and in bringing into the country expert foreign cannon founders. The most famous of these experts was the Swede, Besche, imported under Colbert's auspices. He was given 3,000 *livres* a year as a pension and 600 *livres* for his servants. But there were others: Chaligny, from Nancy; the Keller brothers, from Zurich; and Albergotti, from Venice. As the technicians became available, the demand for their services increased. In 1667 Colbert was laying plans to provide the navy with a total of 6,000 cannon.<sup>175</sup>

On the one hand a series of state foundries were created at Douai, Metz, Strasbourg, Lyon, Pignerol, Narbonne, Perpignan, Besançon, and Paris, for the army; at Toulon, Rochefort, Saintes, and Brest, for the navy. Those at Toulon and Rochefort had a capacity of some 100 cannon a year each. The state foundries were under the direction of officials and of technicians like the Kellers or Chaligny. For them the government secured the raw materials—iron, tin, copper—and the necessary fuel. The buildings were erected and kept up at royal expense. The expert founders directed the actual making of the cannon and paid for the labor, they in turn being paid so much per hundredweight for the work of manufacture. For iron cannon, for instance, they received something like 8 *livres* or 9 *livres* per hundredweight, to cover the cost of manufacture.<sup>176</sup>

On the other hand, alongside the state foundries there grew up a number of others in the hands of private individuals or companies, but controlled and subsidized by the state and working for it. Of these the most important were the ones organized under Colbert's influence. There was one at Vaise, near Lyon, created in 1666 and transferred 10 years later to Toulon. In building up this foundry Colbert was aided by the archbishop of Lyon, who took a lively interest in the project. The archbishop was reporting hopefully on some cannon tests in February, 1666, "The big ones made a break in a wall at 900 paces from where they were, although there was a river between." Two years later the archbishop was instrumental in securing a director for the works at Vaise. On January 13, 1668, he wrote to Colbert of the cannon founder, Emery, who though "certainly an inventive spirit" was out of work and planning to leave the country. Three years earlier, on June 10, 1665, Em-

<sup>175</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 97 ff.

<sup>176</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 99-100.

ery had been granted a privilege for the manufacture of a new kind of cannon, which was to be 75 percent lighter than the ordinary ones. Thus a cannon shooting a 64-pound shot was to weigh 2,123 pounds, instead of 8,523. Emery was to have made cannon for the navy and the East India Company. But his venture seems to have failed, and in 1668 he was much discouraged. Colbert made him director of the foundry at Vaise and aided him in building it up. On October 8 a contract was signed by Emery and one of the Daliez brothers. By it Emery promised to turn out 10 cannon a month, of specified size and dimensions. The cannon were to be taken to Toulon, tested there, and paid for at so much a pound. Emery was to be paid either in money or in metal, to be supplied at fixed rates by Daliez. By April, 1669, Emery was reported to be turning out "beautiful cannon."<sup>177</sup>

Among the most famous of the foundries organized on this sort of basis by Colbert were those at Boussolles and Drambon. On December 2, 1666, Daliez de la Tour wrote to Colbert of his work in organizing the manufacture of cannon at these two places. He sent along a certificate of the testing of four cannon and assured Colbert that they were just as good as those made of Swedish iron. He reported that a beautiful and wondrous cannon had been made the previous day, and expressed the hope that eventually the establishment would grow to be of considerable importance. But success did not come immediately, for a year later, on December 9, 1667, Daliez wrote to Colbert from Lyon to say that he and a man named Dasque were proceeding straightway to Drambon and Boussolles, to devote all their time to the manufacture of cannon and all their efforts to remedying "the defects of the past," which had rendered the cannon something less than perfect.<sup>178</sup>

The next year Daliez secured a most helpful associate in the person of the Swede, Abraham de Besche, of whom the king and Colbert thought so highly that they made him royal director and inspector of foundries and gave him an estate worth 40,000 *livres*, as well as an annual pension. On November 19, 1668, Daliez de la Tour and Besche signed an agreement by which they formed a company to carry on the manufacture of cannon, and possibly anchors as well, at Drambon and Boussolles. Besche had secured a privilege for this enterprise, but by

<sup>177</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 100-1, 314, doc. 32; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 755, 757-58; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fol. 164.

<sup>178</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 142 *bis*, fols. 620-22; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 146, fols. 410-11.

the agreement he gave Daliez a half-interest in it. The partners were to invest capital in the venture, up to the amount of 104,000 *livres*, and they were also to supply 6,000 *livres* a month to pay for labor and running expenses. Books and registers of the company were to be kept at Drambon and Boussolles. To secure the blessing of God, 200 *livres* was to be given to the poor each year.<sup>179</sup>

In June of the next year Daliez reported to Colbert that he was making immense improvements in the foundry at Boussolles. The enterprise was very costly, he declared, explaining that 62,000 *livres* had been put into it in the last 2 years. They were at the moment subjecting the cannon they had made to the most severe tests. Of 160 tried out, 22 had burst. Despite all difficulties, the foundries at Drambon and Boussolles became important sources of cannon for the navy. The Daliez-Besche company added another foundry at Perrigny-sur-Oignon, where the initial expenses alone totaled 60,000 *livres*.<sup>180</sup>

There were other private cannon foundries, in some of which Daliez was interested, at Cosne, Beaumont, Charbonnières, and Arlot in Nivernais, at Saint-Etienne in Forez, and at Vienne and Saint-Gervais in Dauphiné. In Périgord, Colbert encouraged the manufacture of cannon at 8 foundries, of which the most important were at Ans-sur-l'Auzevère, and at Eursac, where a family of founders named Bertin was active. Typical of the method by which Colbert secured cannon from such foundries was a contract between Colbert de Terron on behalf of the king and the sieur de la Cosse de la Trimouille, of Ploissac, in Périgord. It was dated August 20, 1666. By it La Trimouille agreed to furnish the Navy of the West with 300 cannon of 12 and 18-pound caliber within 2 years, at so much the hundredweight. In return he was to be advanced 6,000 *livres*, half down, half in a month. After he had delivered tested and satisfactory cannon to the value of 6,000 *livres* he was to be paid for the rest as he delivered them.<sup>181</sup>

In addition, Colbert granted to the private foundries a variety of privileges, including tax exemptions and preferential treatment in the purchase of metal and the hiring of labor. The best workers were given prizes and special honors. For example, those at Drambon were given a new suit each and the right to wear a blue jerkin. The results of

<sup>179</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 149, fol. 594-600.

<sup>180</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 730-31; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 100-1.

<sup>181</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 100-1, and p. 315, doc. 33.

Colbert's efforts may be indicated by the immense change in the artillery equipment of the navy. In 1661 the navy could boast only 1,045 cannon in its arsenals. In 1665 it had 1,847. In 1677 there were in reserve in the naval arsenals 4,581 cannon. Counting those actually on board ship, the navy had at its disposal 6,460 cannon in 1674. Of course many of the cannon had been purchased abroad, but many of them were the products of the foundries which Colbert was so carefully fostering.<sup>182</sup>

In much the same fashion Colbert encouraged the manufacture of all sorts of small arms: pikes, muskets, pistols, swords, and so forth. Their export was forbidden and their importation facilitated by a reduction in the duties. In the earlier part of the period, importation was necessary. But gradually, as with cannon, the home production was increased. In the matter of the manufacture of such weapons, Louvois was far more important than Colbert, since the needs of the army greatly outweighed those of the navy. In general, both Louvois and Colbert followed the same system, that of purchase by contract from small private manufacturers and entrepreneurs, though Colbert also encouraged the formation of large privileged manufactures in Nivernais, Forez, and Dauphiné, under a Parisian merchant, named Legoux, and under Daliez de la Tour. The private manufacturers were forced to give the state first right to their products. When the merchants of Paris tried to bid for the purchase of arms in competition with the state in 1666, they were forced to desist.

Difficulties arose constantly. There was trouble with the workers at Cosne, for instance, in 1666; and in 1672 it was found that musket stocks of green wood were being used at Nevers. But despite such troubles, production was steadily increased, especially under the stimulation of the prolonged Dutch war. Supported by orders for the army and navy, a number of manufactures grew rapidly. That at Charleville was given the title of *manufacture royale*. It employed 100 workers and sold large quantities of arms to Louvois. Colbert was especially interested in the manufactures of side arms and firearms organized by Daliez de la Tour at Beaumont and at Cosne. But he also gave large orders, either directly or through Daliez, to the 600 master armorers and the 4,000 or 5,000 workers employed in small establishments at Saint-Etienne. At Vienne, in Dauphiné a large manufacture created by Daliez supplanted 30 smaller sword-making establishments. In Alsace the in-

<sup>182</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 101-3.

tendant, Colbert de Croissy, brother of Colbert, set up a manufacture at Giromagny, through an agent named Barbault. Under Colbert's direction, vast quantities of arms were placed in reserve in the naval arsenals. In 1677 there were some 25,000 arms, of the order of pikes, cutlasses, and the like, in such arsenals. At one time there were 10,000 muskets in the arsenal of Rochefort alone.<sup>183</sup>

For the gunpowder and saltpeter required to supply the cannons and muskets of the army and navy, the French government adopted a policy sanctioned by usage and tradition, and not unlike that of England under Elizabeth. The production of saltpeter was made a complete monopoly, and farmed to an entrepreneur named Berthelot, who was given the title of *commissaire général d'artillerie, des poudres, et saltpêtres de France*. Under Berthelot was an elaborate organization of saltpeter-hunters, armed with the right to dig peterish earth in private cellars, stables, and privies, and to exploit the natural deposits of the Pyrenees, Alsace, Franche Comté, and especially Touraine. Attached to the system were more than a score of refineries, where the saltpeter was separated and purified. Altogether, more than 1,000 workers were engaged in saltpeter production in one way or another. By his contract, Berthelot was bound to supply the state with a fixed amount of saltpeter at fixed prices, but any surplus could be sold to individuals.

The manufacture and sale of gunpowder was likewise a state monopoly, and it too was farmed to Berthelot. The government turned over to him the powdermills it owned, and forced the proprietors of private or municipal mills to rent them to the powder farm. The production of powder rose, under pressure from Colbert, who urged Berthelot to increase it, and directed the intendants to aid him. In 1664 the powder monopoly was required to provide the state with 200,000 pounds of gunpowder. Thirteen years later the required amount had been quadrupled, and Berthelot was supplying large supplementary quantities as well. As with saltpeter, once the monopoly had satisfied the needs of the state, it could sell to private persons. But for this privilege the monopoly had to give the state a certain amount of free powder.<sup>184</sup>

*Tar.*—Cannon, arms, and gunpowder had all been made in France long before Colbert's time, but in attempting to introduce the produc-

<sup>183</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 93 ff.; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 725; "Collection Clairambault," No. 793, fol. 690.

<sup>184</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 103-7; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 391.

tion of another necessity for the navy—tar—he was breaking into what was for all intents and purposes a new field. Before 1661 France secured most of its tar from the Baltic countries, usually via Holland. To Colbert, this dependence seemed an economic misfortune, a financial drain, and a military danger. On the one hand he sought to alter the situation by encouraging, through the Company of the North and by other means, the direct importation of tar. On the other hand he labored mightily to establish the production of tar in France.

By 1663 Colbert was bemoaning the necessity of securing tar from Holland and thinking about the possibility of home production. He soon arranged to secure from Sweden two master tar-makers, named Ericson and Porfrey Asoer (Parfrij Asoj), and another, Elias Ahl, who was shortly thereafter made director-general of the manufacture of tar. Ahl, in particular, was overwhelmed with favors by Colbert, who gave him a pension of 2,000 *livres*, large sums for expenses, and 1,200 *livres* for wages for his servants. Colbert did even more: he found Ahl a wife, a French girl from Bordeaux, and gave her a dowry of 6,000 *livres*.

Early in 1664 Ahl reported from the Forest of Sanglavin to the sieur Lombard, *commissaire de marine* at Bordeaux, that he had set up a furnace capable of turning out ten barrels of tar a day. The wood looked good, "fat," and sufficient in quantity to last two years. He was encountering difficulties in securing regular workers, and a local landowner, named Caupos, had delayed his work for some time. What the cost of the tar would be Ahl could not predict until the furnace was in operation, and especially since all the expenditures had been made "in confusion and without keeping track of them." Ahl remarked that he distrusted the local people, that the landowners seemed willing to sell their trees, that he would like his salary for three months paid, and that he could use two Dutch cheeses and a pair of shoes.<sup>185</sup>

On September 12, 1664, Asoer reported from Bordeaux direct to Colbert. He had gone to the forest of Canneaux to teach the inhabitants to make tar, and he had built a furnace there. He wrote dolefully, "I recognized the inferior quality of the pine, which is not fit to give tar; the time lost is to be regretted." But he had found other types of pines in a different locality, which were "as good to distill tar from as one could hope for." The inhabitants had built a dozen furnaces, so as to

<sup>185</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cclx; VII, 292-93; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 119, fols. 509-10; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 116.

supply at 12 *livres* the barrel, or 24 *livres* the *barrique*, the tar that had been promised to Lombard for the navy. The owner of the trees, the sieur Caupos, had arranged to charge 11 *sous* per barrel and 1,000 pounds of resin per furnace, as seigneurial dues. "This exaction," declared Asoer, "has rebuffed the poor workers, who had believed that in serving the king they were freed from such pillaging as is ordinarily carried on against them." Asoer closed by saying that he was going to Bayonne to teach tar-making there, as Colbert had told Lombard to order him to do. That he was not too happy may be indicated by the fact that he asked for a passport allowing him to return home. By November 28, 1664, Lombard could report to Colbert that two of the men who had been taught tar-making by the Swede had become so skillful that they were prepared to instruct others. Whether the Swede was Ericson, or Ahl, or Asoer, is not clear.<sup>186</sup>

Asoer seems to have gone home before long. Ericson died before the end of 1664. Ahl was destined to be used in Auvergne. It was felt, therefore, that something must be done as to the establishment of tar-making in the Landes, where the first attempts had been made. Accordingly, a royal declaration was issued in February, 1665. In it the king set forth the need for ships in commerce, and the need for tar in ships. The death of Ericson (Herrisson), just after he had constructed several furnaces in the Landes, a section ideally suited to tar-making, was mentioned. It was further explained that several persons had learned the art of tar-making from Ericson and were anxious to continue its production. The declaration then discussed some of the technical aspects of tar-making. Tar, it said, was produced from the bottom nine or ten feet of the dried trunks of pine trees. This portion of the tree was commonly used to make charcoal, but as a matter of fact the upper portions of the trunk were sufficient for this purpose.

In view of these facts, the king ordered that tar-making was to be established in the Landes. Any persons who could prove to Colbert that they understood the art would be allowed to set up furnaces. Henceforth, whenever a pine tree was cut for charcoal in the Landes, it must be cut eight or nine feet above the roots, under a penalty of 500 *livres'* fine. Pines for lumber or firewood might be cut lower. The proprietors of the forests were to leave the eight or nine-foot stumps standing to

<sup>186</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 123 *bis*, fol. 876; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 693-94.



dry for three years. The tar-makers were to pay for the stump at the time the tree was cut. The price was to be in proportion to the value of the whole tree. In addition, the tar-makers were to pay for any damage or inconvenience caused by leaving the stumps standing. Inspectors were to be appointed to enforce these regulations.<sup>187</sup>

By August, 1665, tar-making was spreading, for on the eleventh of that month the ubiquitous Daliez de la Tour wrote to Colbert from Grenoble that he was about to set up a tar furnace. Two days later Lombard reported from Bordeaux that he had been able to find four good tar-makers to be sent to Canada. On October 13 Elias Ahl arrived at Riom, where an official named Courtin was waiting to take him on a tour of the forests of the district. The tour was a success, for on November 6 Courtin wrote Colbert that a great number of pines suitable for tar-making had been located and that it remained only to make arrangements with the proprietors. Ahl and Courtin had selected two forests in particular. One was the property of the Reformed Fathers of Chaise-Dieu. There Courtin planned to take the bark off 1,500 trees, for, as he remarked, the forest of the Fathers was "useful to them only for its beauty." In the other forest, he planned to bark 500 trees, since it was so far from the Château Chambon of its proprietor, the marquis de Poligniat, that he would be scarcely affected by the step. "One might agree to pay something to these proprietors for their trees," concluded Courtin judiciously, "but perhaps it would be wiser not to promise anything positively until after they have been distilled, when we will know the true value of the trees; and indeed after the success of the test the whole forests might be bought."<sup>188</sup>

After receiving Courtin's letter, Colbert secured the issuance of a decree of the Council of State, forbidding the proprietors to cut trees until Courtin had marked those needed for "the service of the king." On November 29, 1665, Courtin acknowledged the receipt of the decree and suggested that one test of tar-burning, to include 500 trees and to produce 60 or 70 tons of tar, might not be sufficient. The peasants might not learn enough from one experience and then Ahl might have to stay much longer than he planned. So Courtin proposed that there be 2 such tar-burnings in 1666 and 2 in 1667. Colbert seems to have told

<sup>187</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 88-90.

<sup>188</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fols. 328-29; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 693-94, 708, 710-12.

Courtin to deal gently with the Fathers of Chaise-Dieu, for he said that if he could not buy their trees he would look elsewhere.<sup>189</sup>

By April, 1666, the work was well under way, since Courtin informed Colbert that he was advancing the money to pay the peasant laborers and planning to reimburse himself in October from the tar that was made. He was also investigating "the things to do to preserve the pine forests, so that the establishment of this manufacture may last forever in this region." The same problem occurred to de Fortia, intendant in Auvergne, at about the same time, for in a letter to Colbert dated April 20, 1666, he had an ingenious suggestion to make. He pointed out that to preserve the tar manufacture, the forests must be conserved. This was difficult, for once the trees were cut, the proprietors would rather turn the land to agriculture than wait thirty years for another growth of trees. One of the chief forests of the region was that of Margeride. Its proprietor, the comte d'Achon, had been condemned *in absentia* by the court of the *grands jours d'Auvergne*, to the forfeiture of his estates, among other things. If the king decided to pardon the count, or to grant his estates to another person, it would be very simple to reserve the forest for royal use.<sup>190</sup>

Earlier in the same year Colbert had written of his "great joy" at learning that the manufacture of tar could be established in Provence. In March he was giving directions for a reduction of charcoal-making in Provence so as to leave more wood for tar-making. On August 8, 1666, Elias Ahl wrote to Colbert from Provence, whither he had proceeded to aid in setting up the manufacture there. He announced that he was back from his trip to "auvergne" and "daffiné" (Auvergne and Dauphiné), and that he had received his orders from the duc de Mercure (Mercoeur) and M. daupedde (d'Oppede, first president of the *Parlement* of Aix). He enclosed a statement of the amount of tar furnished the navy by the *fabrique royale* at Vidauban, in the Argens basin, where he had been working. The report covered the period from May 11 to August 4, 1666, and showed that in that period 268 barrels of tar, weighing 36,504 pounds, had been supplied to naval warehouses.<sup>191</sup>

More important to Ahl than questions of production was the trouble he was having with one of his servants, named Elias Ejrelson. This

<sup>189</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 713.

<sup>190</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 714-15, 737.

<sup>191</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III, 56-58, 65-67; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 139, fols. 113, 114.

servant wished to go home, he said, and had committed "disorders and a thousand brutalities in the lodging" until Ahl gave him permission to do so. Since Colbert had promised Ahl to pay all expenses for him and his servants for the trip from Sweden to France and back, the tar-maker now appealed for a sum sufficient to send Ejrelson home. Colbert investigated the matter and got quite a different story from one of his agents, d'Infreville, intendant of the marine at Toulon. The servant's time of service was up, but Ahl, learning that he had decided to become a Catholic and settle in France, wished to send him home to prevent his doing so. Ahl had threatened to shoot Ejrelson, saying that that was the way he would have been treated in Sweden, but the intendant took the servant to a safe place. Pressure was brought on Ahl, and he finally agreed to let Ejrelson stay in France, insisting only that the matter must be explained to the Swedish ambassador, so that the servant's family would not hold Ahl responsible.<sup>192</sup>

Through the use of Swedish master tar-makers like Ahl, through the efforts of intendants and other officials, through the constant support of Colbert, tar-making was thus established in Médoc, in the Landes, in Provence, in Auvergne, and in Dauphiné. Determined to make a success of the various establishments, Colbert repeatedly insisted that the tar used in the French navy must be of French not foreign origin. In March, 1670, he severely reprimanded M. d'Infreville for buying a large quantity of northern tar from the Dutch. A year earlier he had shown some interest in the possibility of exporting French tar to England.<sup>193</sup>

A real blow to the tar manufacture in France came in the fall of 1671, when Elias Ahl, who had been showered with benefits by Colbert, absconded with a good deal of money. Colbert was shocked when he heard the news, and in a letter of November 21, 1671, to Lombard, talked of demanding justice through the French ambassador in Sweden. Nor was this an idle threat, for less than two years later, on May 19, 1673, Colbert wrote to M. Feuquières, the French ambassador at Stockholm, and told him the whole story. He recounted the favors Ahl had received and then explained that not only had the tar-maker deserted his wife and children, but that before doing so he had gathered a large

<sup>192</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 139, fols. 113, 405-6.

<sup>193</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 478; III<sup>a</sup>, 148-49, 223, 239-40; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 116-17.

quantity of tar from those who were making it in Médoc, sold it to royal storehouses, and run off with the proceeds—22,000 *livres*. Colbert urged Feuquières to find out if Ahl had come back to Sweden.<sup>194</sup>

Despite the Ahl imbroglio, tar-making continued in France. In 1672 to preserve, protect, and improve tar-making in the generality of Bordeaux, Daguesseau, the intendant, issued a series of regulations which were endorsed by Colbert, and approved by the Council of State on June 13 of that year. The regulations sought to prevent the destruction of pine woods suitable for tar-making, by fire, cutting, or pasturing. It was provided that the pine trunks and roots were to be dried in winter and distilled in summer. In distillation the heart and roots of the pine, which made the best tar, were not to be mixed with the bark, which gave a hard, coarse tar. Careful provisions were made for the time and manner of distillation, so that the quality of the tar might not be impaired by foreign matter or by rain. The sale of tar was regulated, the varieties were distinguished, and inspection of the tar was made obligatory. Barrels that had been inspected were to be marked with a *fleur-de-lys*.<sup>195</sup>

Daguesseau wrote Colbert that he was sure the new regulations would have a good effect, and that a protective import duty of 2 *livres* per barrel on tar would be advisable. But on July 1, 1672, Colbert replied that he could not approve such a tariff, since the tar-makers of the Médoc could not supply tar "as good or as cheap as those of the North." Nor could they produce enough to supply the needs of France. A tariff, therefore, would tend to increase the cost of tar for naval and other ships. On the other hand, if Daguesseau felt that the tax was absolutely essential, Colbert was prepared to ask the king to consider the matter. It is clear that the outbreak of the Dutch war a few weeks earlier had caused Colbert, for the moment at least, to set more store by a cheap and abundant supply of tar for the navy than by the encouragement of the home production of tar. Nor did Colbert ever change his mind on this point sufficiently to put a tariff on tar. Of the various establishments for tar-making under Colbert, those in Médoc seem to have been most successful. But their productivity was never such as to free France from the need of importation.<sup>196</sup>

As in the case of tar, so in that of other naval supplies Colbert en-

<sup>194</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>1</sup>, 406-7; VII, 292-93.

<sup>195</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 352-53, doc. 132.

<sup>196</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>1</sup>, 452.

deavored, with only partial success, to encourage production in France. He strove to make hemp growing more general, and considerably increased the amount of this vegetable fiber raised in France. With the raw material at hand, Colbert was determined to reduce the dependence of the French on Holland for ropes and cables, "whatever might be the cost." Rope-makers were secured from Holland, and rope-making establishments set up, at the expense of the state and under state direction, in the chief ports—Rochefort, Toulon, Havre, Marseille. Brest boasted three such establishments. In some of them master rope-makers, paid by the government, worked solely for it. In others entrepreneurs were required to furnish a given quantity of rope to the navy at fixed prices, but were allowed to sell any surplus to private persons.<sup>197</sup>

Colbert, for similar reasons, was anxious to develop in France the production of wood for naval construction, and especially of masts. Both his Company of the Pyrenees, and his Ordinance of Waters and Forests were based in part on this objective. Wood of one sort or another was secured in the Pyrenees, Guyenne, Saintonge, Périgord, Angoumois, Poitou, Brittany, Auvergne, Burgundy, the Vosges, Nivernais, Dauphiné, Provence, Languedoc, and Vivarais. Spruce was secured from the Pyrenees, oak and spruce from the forests of the Grand Chartreuse, masts from Auvergne, the Pyrenees, upper Provence, and the Vosges. In general, the government arranged directly for the purchase and cutting of the timber, and it was not loath to bring pressure on proprietors who hesitated to part with their forests. Frequently, however, it employed intermediaries, like the indefatigable Daliez de la Tour. But despite all Colbert's efforts, France remained partially dependent on foreign lands, such as Savoy and the Baltic countries, for some wood, especially masts.<sup>198</sup>

In the matter of sailcloth, Colbert's problem was somewhat different, for France had flourishing manufactures of this necessary textile in Brittany and elsewhere. New manufactures were started by the government in Rochefort and Brest. Furthermore, the establishment of similar manufactures by private entrepreneurs was encouraged, through subsidies and through large orders at prices higher than those of the open market. In this field, also, Daliez de la Tour was active. He estab-

<sup>197</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 118-19; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>1</sup>, 153.

<sup>198</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 111-13; Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>2</sup>, 67-69; III<sup>3</sup>, 12, 50-57, and *passim*; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 704 ff.

lished a manufacture of sailcloth at Vienne, in Dauphiné, and by 1665 he was producing a fabric which he claimed to be stronger than that made in Brittany, though it cost a good deal more, despite the efforts of Daliez to reduce the price. Colbert pleased his henchmen greatly by declaring the product to be satisfactory. Daliez also worked to establish a manufacture of sailcloth at Lyon. In 1666 the hardy entrepreneur could report that his own sailcloth enterprise was going splendidly. So successful was Colbert in encouraging the production of sailcloth that at one time he came to fear that there might be overproduction of it, and discouraged the intendant of Auvergne, who was planning to establish a manufacture at Gannat.<sup>109</sup>

If Colbert did not succeed so uniformly in building up the production of naval supplies as he did in the case of cannon and sailcloth, still it is clear that he greatly reduced the proportion of such products that France had to purchase abroad. Further, through home production, supplemented by imports from foreign countries, he was able to build, equip, and keep at a high point of efficiency the greatest navy that France had ever had, and the greatest navy perhaps, relative to those of other nations, that France was ever to have.

#### 6. MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS

The policies and methods which Colbert developed for the encouragement of important industries, such as those producing textiles, stockings, lace, glass, or metals, he applied to a variety of minor industries as well, without much change. But in some instances significant variations of his standard practices are to be found. Such was the case with soap.

*Soap.*—Colbert, in 1663, was thinking about the problems connected with soap production. But it was not until two years later that he took steps to reorganize the industry—steps that may conceivably have been inspired by England's experiment with a soap monopoly, in the reign of Charles I. On February 8, 1665, a royal brevet granted to sieur Fromont for thirty years the exclusive right to manufacture soap along the Atlantic coast of France, from Calais to Bayonne. He was to have the right to make all sorts of soap, save only black soap manufactured from whale oil. He was to be allowed to sell it inside France at reason-

<sup>109</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 131, fols. 201-2, 280-81, 441-42; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 725; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 118-19.

able prices, and to export it as well. On the same day another brevet gave Fromont the right to make soda from herbs, grass, and so forth, in the same area. He was to be permitted to sell both the ashes and the soda.<sup>200</sup>

Some weeks later, on May 6, 1665, by royal decree, brevet, and letters patent, a privilege was granted to Gratien Vauchelet, a merchant of Reims, and his associates. It gave them for ten years the exclusive right to manufacture, in the province of Champagne, oily soap (*savons gras*) of the Dutch type. Since this soap was used in the fulling of cloth and ~~was~~ of considerable importance in the textile industry, Vauchelet was required by the terms of the privilege to produce enough of the soap to supply the whole province and to sell it at the same price as that usually charged for the Dutch soap. Though the *échevins* of Reims had approved the project, the *Parlement* of Paris was more reluctant to do so. Before registering the privilege, it appointed a committee of six expert merchants to examine the quality and the utility of Vauchelet's soap. Even after the committee made a favorable report, there was much delay. Finally on August 23, 1666, more than a year after the date of the privilege, the king ordered the *Parlement* to register it. The *Parlement* complied on September 7, 1666. That the manufacture of soap founded by Vauchelet survived, in one fashion or another, seems to be indicated by the fact that in 1692 *savon gras* was still being made at Reims.<sup>201</sup>

Two weeks after the privilege was granted to Vauchelet, on May 20, 1665, a new privilege for soap was issued to Roland Fréjus, of Marseille. This was the same Roland Fréjus who was involved at that time in the trade with North Africa and the Company of Albouze. It is quite possible that the soap privilege was given to him to help him finance his commercial ventures. At any rate, the royal brevet of May 20 gave him the right to establish at Paris a manufacture of white and marbled soap of the types made in Genoa and Alicante, and the exclusive right to sell such soap. The brevet was confirmed by letters patent of September 11, 1665, which also made the terms of the privilege more explicit. Fréjus was to have the right to establish his soap manufacture anywhere within 2 leagues of Paris. For 10 years

<sup>200</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, cclx; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 87-88; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,790, fol. 264.

<sup>201</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 137-38, 139-40, 142-43; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,790, fols. 266-67; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685, report on manufactures, 1693.

he was to have the exclusive right to sell white and marbled soap of the Genoa and Alicanto types in Paris and for a radius of 10 leagues round about. But he was forbidden to interfere with persons making other types of soap. In 1666 Fréjus was to be held to produce 200,000 pounds of soap, and in each of the 9 following years he was to make 300,000 pounds. To Fréjus was given exemption from the lodging of soldiers.<sup>202</sup>

Still another soap privilege was granted in 1665, by royal letters patent of November 5. Henry Greslot, bourgeois of Paris, had pointed out that there were no manufactures of soap in the areas under the jurisdiction of the *parlements* of Toulouse and Bordeaux, or in the province of Champagne, and had indicated his desire to establish such manufactures, though he was somewhat deterred by the prospective expenses. Colbert had investigated the proposal and approved it. The privilege was accordingly granted to Greslot. It gave him for 20 years the exclusive right to make soap in the areas mentioned. But he was forbidden to interfere with any soap manufactures already in operation, and he was to produce at least 1,200,000 pounds of soap a year.<sup>203</sup>

On the last day of 1665 yet another soap privilege was granted in preliminary form. By it Jacques Beuf of Toulon was given the right for twenty years to make white, marbled, and soft soap, and all other kinds as well, and to sell it and to export it. Letters patent were to be issued to Beuf, permitting Pierre Rigat of Lyon to establish the manufacture of soap anywhere in France. A decree of the Council of State was to be issued providing for an additional import duty of 8 percent on all soap imported from Alicanto or other foreign places, and this duty was to be collected by Beuf's agents. Beuf was to be responsible for the establishment in France of enough soap manufactures to supply the whole country. All existing soap manufactures were to be required to sell their output to Beuf at the current market prices. It is clear that it was intended that Beuf should have a monopoly of the sale of soap for all France.

From the terms of the privilege, it seems that the project of Fréjus must have lapsed. Beuf apparently was not planning to go into soap manufacturing directly, but rather to let Rigat take care of that part of the enterprise. That Beuf's privilege was regarded as a valuable one

<sup>202</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,790, fols. 264, 268-70.

<sup>203</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,790, fols. 275-77.



is made clear by some of its provisions. In return for the soap rights granted to him, Beuf undertook to supply, free of charge, bread and biscuit for the galley slaves of twenty royal galleys. These provisions were to be of good and loyal quality. Each slave was to be supplied with thirty-six ounces of bread per day while the galleys were in port, and with thirty-two ounces of biscuit when the galleys were away on voyages. Contemplated voyages were to be announced to Beuf six weeks in advance, so that he would have time to prepare the biscuit. The provisions were to be distributed by royal officials. If Beuf was called upon to supply more than the amount needed for twenty galleys, he was to be paid for the extra quantities. The entrepreneur was to be allowed to use royal granaries and ovens if he needed them.<sup>204</sup>

By April, 1666, opposition was growing to the registration of the letters patent embodying the Beuf-Rigat privilege, which had been issued on March 11. D'Oppede, first president of the *Parlement* at Aix, wrote to Colbert on the thirteenth of April to say that, though the *Parlement* disapproved of the letters patent, he would be able to prevent their being rejected flatly. On the other hand, d'Oppede felt that he would be unable to prevent the *Parlement* from bringing the matter before the king. He advised Colbert to "smooth out matters up there, as you know how to do, Monseigneur."<sup>205</sup>

Nine days later the *prévôt des marchands* of Lyon wrote Colbert to oppose the Beuf-Rigat privilege. Such a grant would destroy the trade in "an article which holds the next place after bread among the things which are absolutely necessary for life." Even the poor used great quantities of soap for laundry and other purposes. One man should not be given so much power over a great industry. Further, such a privilege was likely to interfere with many persons who made a living by selling soap to Flanders, England, Holland, and northern Europe.<sup>206</sup>

What happened in the matter of the soap monopoly is somewhat obscure. Beuf seems to have dropped out of the picture. But tariff changes were made, much like what had been proposed. By a royal declaration of November, 1667, and a decree of the Council of State of the twenty-fourth of the same month, it was ordered that in addition to the regular import duties prescribed by the tariffs of 1664 and

<sup>204</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 258-61.

<sup>205</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 763; AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 1, decree of October 21, 1669.

<sup>206</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 680-81.

1667—the tariff of 1664 had provided for a duty of 3 *livres*, 10 *sous* per hundredweight on all soap, while the tariff of 1667 had levied a duty of 5 *livres* on black, green, soft, and liquid soap, and of 7 *livres* per hundredweight on all other kinds—there was to be levied on all foreign soap from Alicanto or elsewhere an import duty of eight pounds of soap per hundredweight, or the equivalent in money. This duty was to be collected by Pierre Rigat.<sup>207</sup>

Opposition to the soap monopoly continued and in November, 1668, the Estates of Languedoc were insisting on its dissolution before they would negotiate about increasing their gift to the crown. Earlier in the same year Rigat had encountered another sort of difficulty. By the terms of his privilege, all soap manufacturers had been required to sell their soap to him at market prices. Conversely, he seems to have been expected or required to take all the soap offered him. With a market thus assured, and stirred on by the merchant-grocers, who were opposed to Rigat's monopoly of the sale of soap, a number of soap manufacturers had opened up old and abandoned soap works. The result was that Rigat soon found himself overloaded with soap, and was forced to appeal to the Council of State. By a decree of July 23, 1668, that body forbade the reestablishment of abandoned soap works in the area subject to the jurisdiction of the *parlements* of Bordeaux and Toulouse, and ordered a list drawn up to show what soap works were actually in operation.<sup>208</sup>

As such difficulties grew, the Rigat soap monopoly seems to have been dissolved. At least on October 21, 1669, it lost what must have been one of its most important privileges. On that date a decree of the Council of State, based on the advice of Colbert, took away from Rigat the right to collect the import duty of eight pounds per hundredweight of soap, and turned the collection of this duty over to François Le Gendre, farmer-general of the united tax farms. The duty itself was retained until the end of the Dutch war, when by the terms of the peace the Dutch were to be subjected only to the duties of the tariff of 1664. To prevent unfairness to the French and others, a decree of April 15, 1679, abolished the extra soap duty altogether.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>207</sup> AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 1, decree of October 21, 1669; F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* on tariffs, 1693.

<sup>208</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 149, fols. 531-32; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 356-57.

<sup>209</sup> AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 1, decrees of October 21, 1669, April 15, 1679.

Just how far these various soap monopolies were intended to encourage the home production of soap, and how far they were fiscal devices to increase the revenues in one fashion or another, it is difficult to determine. Apparently the motives behind them were mingled. On some occasions, however, steps were taken that were clearly intended to promote soap production. A case in point involved Louis Chevalier, Claude Marseil, and Jean Le Roux, who were manufacturing black soap at Amiens and selling to cloth-makers, who used it in the preparation of textiles. The *échevins* of the city were hostile to these manufacturers for one reason or another, and on March 23, 1666, ordered them to close down their plant, on the grounds that the smoke from it was annoying and harmful to the inhabitants of Amiens. The manufacturers, however, countered this move by securing a decree of the Council of State on May 27, 1666. The decree pointed out that the soap plant did not seem to have impaired the health of the people of Amiens, that doctors had reported it to be harmless, that similar establishments were not found objectionable at Rouen, Reims, and other places, and that the soap was needed by the cloth-makers. The decree therefore permitted the manufacturers to continue to make soap and ordered the intendant to support them in their rights. But it permitted the *échevins* of Amiens to send in a report as to the reasons behind their action.<sup>210</sup>

Or again, Colbert helped Van Robais to set up soap works at Abbéville, to manufacture soap for use in preparing cloth. In 1668 Colbert aided Marissal, at Calais, to establish a similar plant. On September 18 of that year Marissal wrote Colbert to thank him for his assistance and for exempting him and his soap works from the lodging of soldiers. He assured Colbert that he would try to produce enough green and liquid soap so that it would not be necessary to import any from abroad, and so that the plant would be profitable to the public. He asked Colbert's protection against the "gentlemen of the city, jealous of the exemption."<sup>211</sup>

A somewhat different sort of encouragement was granted by a decree of the Council of State dated December 7, 1680, to Robert Collinet, sieur de la Rerie. Collinet had been on voyages to the East Indies and had learned there of an excellent soap which was called *Kaymack*, a native term meaning cream of soap. He sent his brother to find out how

<sup>210</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 285-86.

<sup>211</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 195, 342, doc. 102.

*Kaymack* was made, and after great trouble and expense the brother succeeded. The chief ingredient was a kind of potash, made from the lees of grapes, and secured from Persia by the soap-makers of the Indies. After many endeavors, Colbert succeeded in producing *Kaymack*, and found that "it whitens and cleans much better than ordinary soap, that it nourishes and preserves the substance of fabrics and clothes instead of drying and changing them as other soaps do," and that it made very good carriage grease. Collinet planned not to import foreign soda to make his soap, but to set up plants in the vineyard areas to make potash from the wine lees, a very advantageous thing to do since it would give value to a product otherwise almost useless. La Reynie, *lieutenant-général de la police* of Paris, and a number of merchants of the city were consulted on the project. They gave it their approval and Colbert endorsed it. The decree therefore granted to Collinet for twenty years the exclusive right to make potash from wine lees, to make soap from such potash throughout all France, and the exclusive right to sell such soap. He was also given some minor exemptions for his workers.<sup>212</sup>

*Leather.*—In the field of leather-making there was no question of general monopolies such as were attempted with soap. Rather Colbert sought to encourage the industry by introducing and acclimating new processes. To a bourgeois of Paris, named Louis Bonnet, an exclusive privilege for twelve years, to exploit a new method of tanning and preparing leather, was given by a decree of December 31, 1664, confirmed and extended on March 1 and October 25, 1665. The new process was held to be quicker and to produce a finer leather of better grain, color, and durability. The privilege was granted only after the leather produced by Bonnet had been examined and tested by experts.<sup>213</sup>

A manufacture of English calfskin, organized in 1665 by three entrepreneurs, La Salle, Monginot, and Vidal, at Châtellerault and in the faubourg Saint-Marcel of Paris, came to little, despite aid from Colbert and the enthusiastic support of the intendant at Poitiers. For a manufacture of gilt leather in the Flemish style, established in the faubourg Saint-Antoine, Colbert secured Dutch workers in 1665. A royal manufacture of leathers was built up at Corbeil, in the years following 1666, by two entrepreneurs, Jabach and La Haye. It was endowed with

<sup>212</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,790, fols. 279-80.

<sup>213</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 238-42; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,790, fols. 132-37; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 343, doc. 104, the date of the letters patent is here given incorrectly as March 1, 1666, instead of March 1, 1665.

a 30-year privilege and was the beneficiary of subsidies from the state totaling 63,000 *livres*. It received, for instance, in 1670, 35,000 to cover part of the cost "of the construction of a mill which has been built on the river at Corbeil."<sup>214</sup>

Colbert also tried to encourage the manufacture of leather by enactments of general effect. A decree of the Council of State of June 15, 1666, sought to remedy one situation. It declared that France had a large quantity of livestock, and especially of cows and young calves. Nevertheless, a great amount of leather was brought in from Barbary, Hungary, England, and other countries, and this imported leather seemed "to be more serviceable," "this difference," explained the decree, "proceeding from the fact that farmers, tillers of the soil, and other individuals, through impatience and bad management, take to market their calves at the age of twelve to fifteen days, and that the butchers are constrained to buy them for lack of better ones." In districts remote from Paris, calves were not killed till they reached the age of two or three months. On calves younger than that there was less and poorer meat, and their skins did not make such good leather. The decree therefore ordered that no calves were to be bought, sold, or butchered until they were two or three months old.<sup>215</sup>

There was such difficulty in enforcing the regulation for the Paris area that it was modified by a new decree of October 25, 1666. This explained the earlier enactment, spoke of the king's desire to aid manufacturing in general and tanneries in particular, and declared that if calves were not killed till they were older, there were "grounds for hoping that the need for importing foreign leathers would henceforth be obviated." But because there were no places near Paris suitable for the feeding of calves, the minimum age for killing calves was reduced for that area from two months to six weeks.<sup>216</sup>

A new difficulty arose before long. It was found that certain tanners from the Paris area were making long-term contracts with butchers to take all their calfskins, of whatever quality. This made it easy for the butchers to dispose of skins of calves which had not attained the statutory age. A decree of May 28, 1668, declared that this practice hindered

<sup>214</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 784, also 753-54; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 197; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, col. 444; Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 430-31.

<sup>215</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,790, fols. 151-52.

<sup>216</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,790, fols. 153-54.

the establishment in France of the manufacture of leather in the English style, by reducing the supply of good calfskins. It therefore forbade the butchers to make such long-term contracts, abrogated the existing ones, and ordered that in the future the skins must be sold on a week-to-week or, at most, a month-to-month basis.<sup>217</sup>

Protection was also afforded the French leather industry by means of tariffs. The tariff of 1664 levied import duties of 15 *livres* the hundredweight on gilt leather, of 12 *livres* the dozen on tanned ox hides, and of 6 *livres* the dozen on tanned cowhides. The tariff of 1667 raised these rates to 30 *livres*, 14 *livres*, and 7 *livres* respectively. In similar fashion, the duty on tanned calfskins was raised from 15 *sous* to 18 *sous* the dozen; that on dressed (*corroyés*) calfskins from one *livre*, 10 *sous* to one *livre*, 15 *sous* the dozen; that on tanned goat skins from 16 *sous* to 18 *sous* the dozen; and that on chamoisskins, or other skins tanned in the chamois style, from one *livre*, 10 *sous* to 3 *livres* the dozen.<sup>218</sup>

To keep hides in France for the benefit of the French tanners, the tariff of 1664 had doubled the duty on their export. But Colbert's ideas on this point went even further. "It is necessary," he declared, "to keep carefully within the kingdom all hides and leathers." In 1667 a decree of the Council of Commerce, dated March 10, forbade the export of all untanned hides, on the ground that the continued export of them from Normandy, Picardy, Brittany, Saintonge, and Poitou injured the tanners of France, caused the importation of leather and hides, and thus took money out of the kingdom.<sup>219</sup>

Such protective measures stimulated the establishment of tanneries of all sorts. At Divonne, on the Swiss border, a Genevan named Diodati (Déodat) set up a tannery for the production of chamois leather, sometime before the fall of 1671. In October of that year, through the intendant Bouchu, he offered Colbert to begin the manufacture of calf leather, if the import duties were increased. He seems at least to have secured the protection of Colbert, for his work in chamois leather. In 1673 a manufacture of Russian leather, through the aid of Swedish workers, was planned by Colbert, and in 1680 the production of one type of Russian leather was actually established. In 1672, with the aid of

<sup>217</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,790, fol. 157.

<sup>218</sup> *F<sup>12</sup>*, No. 1910, *mémoire* on tariffs of 1693.

<sup>219</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 324-26; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 197.

Colbert, privileged manufactures for the preparation of goat skins, of chamois leather, and of red Morocco leather, were founded in Languedoc, at Quillan and near Alet. On April 29, 1675, statutes and regulations were approved for the formation of a new guild—that of the *hongrieurs*, or tanners of leather in the Hungarian style. It was composed of twelve masters, who in the preceding years had learned the art of making Hungarian leather. For their tanning, they were given the privilege of buying salt tax-free. The formation of such a guild is sound evidence of the introduction of new tanning techniques in France. Colbert's interest in tanning persisted to the end of his life. On October 16, 1682, for example, he wrote the intendant at Limoges, and expressed the hope that since the measures which had been taken to prevent the seizure of livestock for taxes had increased the number of animals, the tanning industry would be stimulated.<sup>220</sup>

*Paper and sugar.*—Colbert looked upon the paper industry in a somewhat different light from that in which he regarded the manufacture of soap or most other products. Even before his time, French paper production had reached considerable proportions, and the exportation of paper was of some importance. As a result, Colbert seems to have done comparatively little to encourage the manufacture of paper. The tariff of 1664 placed an import duty of only one *livre*, 10 *sous* per hundred-weight on foreign paper, and the rate was not altered by the tariff of 1667. In fact, paper was most important to Colbert, as an object of taxation. He was interested in preserving the quality of the paper produced and in increasing the amount. But he was even more interested in the problems connected with taxing it.

In 1670 he declared himself convinced that a decrease in the taxes on paper would lead to greater production. But the advent of the Dutch war led him to investigate the possibility of levying new taxes on paper. By 1674, though he hesitated to take the step for fear of "ruining one of the first and most important manufactures of the kingdom," he was driven to place a new and heavier internal tax on paper. The tax was so onerous and so heartily disliked that it was partly responsible for the outbreaks of 1674–75, and it can hardly have tended to encourage the production of paper.<sup>221</sup>

<sup>220</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 796, fols. 389–90; "Collection Clairambault," No. 793, fol. 132; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 197–98; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 739–40.

<sup>221</sup> F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* on tariffs, 1693; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 203; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 566, and notes 3 and 4; II<sup>e</sup>, ccxxxi, 330–31.

In the matter of sugar refining, on the contrary, Colbert used taxes to stimulate home industry. The tariff of 1664 had levied an import duty of 15 *livres* the hundredweight on all refined sugar, and of 4 *livres* the hundredweight on all raw sugar. The sugar refiners pleaded for additional protection and asked that the duties be proportional to the stage of refinement of the sugar. They pointed out that their foreign competitors, and especially the Dutch, had to pay almost no duties on the bulky raw or semirefined sugar that they imported. If further protection were not granted, the refiners were sure that "a manufacture so beautiful and so useful to the state" would be ruined. It also seemed wise to encourage sugar production in the French islands by giving their sugar preferential tariff treatment.

A decree of September 15, 1665, accordingly altered the tariff duties in a number of respects. The duty on refined sugar from foreign countries was set at 22 *livres*, 10 *sous* the hundredweight. Sugar from Brazil and Saint Thomas was taxed at 6 *livres*, 7 *livres* 10 *sous*, and 15 *livres*, depending on its stage of refinement. All sugar from the French islands was to pay an import duty of only 4 *livres* the hundredweight. This last rate was cut in half by a decree of December 10, 1670, but was put back at 4 *livres* in 1675 because of the financial needs caused by the Dutch war. Though at first the sugar duties were applied only to the area of the "five big farms," a decree of January 15, 1671, extended them so as to include almost all of France.

In addition to this heavy protection, the sugar refiners were given other benefits through the tariff system. By a decree of January 24, 1671, they were granted a rebate of 4 *livres* per hundredweight on all refined sugar they exported, since they were paying an import duty of 2 *livres* per hundredweight on raw sugar, and since it took 2 pounds or more of raw sugar to make one of refined sugar. At Rouen, where an additional import duty was paid on raw sugar, an additional rebate on the export of refined sugar was granted. Further, when Colbert found in 1670 and 1671 that Nantes and Saint-Malo were selling raw sugar to the Dutch, who refined it in Holland, he took drastic measures to see that such export of raw sugar was stopped. For a while, he even shut the merchants of Nantes out of the West India trade.

Until the last years of his life, Colbert was quite prepared to encourage sugar refining in the French West Indies. But when refineries were set up there in such numbers as to threaten the growing industry in



France, he had to make a choice. He decided in favor of the French refiners, and by a decree of April 18, 1682, placed a duty of 8 *livres* per hundredweight on refined sugar from the French islands. Shortly after Colbert's death a decree of January 21, 1684, forbade the establishment of new refineries in the islands.<sup>222</sup>

Colbert's tariff policy on sugar was consciously aimed at the stimulation of refining in France. But his aid to the refiners was not limited to the manipulation of import duties and export rebates. He helped a certain Guy Terré to start two refineries at Rouen. In 1672 he persuaded Gaspard Maurellet to establish a refinery at Marseille, so as to reduce the market there for Brazilian and Dutch sugar. To aid the venture, Maurellet was given, by a decree of September 15, 1674, the right to ship into France from the free port of Marseille 50,000 pounds of refined sugar a year, paying only such import duties as would be paid on shipments from ordinary port cities. So successful was the venture that Maurellet was refining 130,000 pounds of sugar in 1691. By 1700 he was refining 150,000 pounds a year, and was prepared to double the output.

Colbert encouraged Huguelas and Dolbreil to start 3 refineries at Bordeaux, and then extended the protective import duties so as to include the Bordeaux area, in the hope that refining would be still further stimulated there. In 1671 he arranged that sugar exported from Bordeaux should enjoy such entrepôt privileges that it would have to pay no duties in going across France to Italy, Savoy, or elsewhere. As in so many other fields, France needed foreign experts in sugar refining. Under Colbert, German and Dutch refiners were brought to work in the refineries at Orléans. At Angers, in 1673, a Dutchman named Van den Bosch founded a refinery. Germans from Hamburg started refineries at Nantes. Tinneback, from Rotterdam, set up a refinery at Saumur. Tersmitten, of the Company of the North, started one at La Rochelle. A German from Hamburg, Vedenant by name, established one at Marseille. When Colbert came to power, there was almost no refining of sugar carried on in France. When he died in 1683, there were some

<sup>222</sup> F<sup>12</sup>, No. 1910, *mémoire* on tariffs, 1693; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances de France*, I, 546 ff.; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 263 ff.; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decrees of September 15, 1665; December 10, 1670; January 15, 1671; June 3, 1671; May 24, 1675; April 18, 1682; September 28, 1684. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 208-9, 368-69; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>9</sup>, 660 ff.

29 refineries in France: 2 at Dunkirk, one at Dieppe, one at Saumur, one at Angers, one at Tours, 2 at Orléans, 4 at La Rochelle, 3 at Bourdeaux, one at Toulouse, 8 at Rouen, 2 at Marseille, and 3 at Nantes. These refineries were consuming raw sugar in 1683 at the rate of 17,700,000 pounds a year.<sup>223</sup>

The industries which have been discussed so far by no means exhaust the list of those established in France or encouraged by Colbert. In a number of less important fields of industrial activity, privileges were granted, subsidies given, and aid of one sort or another extended. A royal butter-producing establishment was founded at Vanves, in 1668, by the sieur Gin. Three years earlier the sieur Jolly was given a privilege for the manufacture of "conserves" from sea fish. A privilege was granted for the production of chocolate, and a number for the manufacture of ices. A doctor from Dijon secured a privilege for the manufacture and sale of orangeade and lemonade. Plants for the refining and whitening of salt were created, under Colbert's influence, at Saint-Omer, Dunkirk, Arras, Nantes, and La Rochelle.

Nor was it only food products that inspired the grant of privileges. In 1664 a privilege was issued for the manufacture and sale (at fixed prices) of candles and tapers made from artificial wax, and a similar privilege was granted five years later. In 1665 Jean Pontoise, maker of cannon and powder, secured a privilege for the use of three types of furnace invented by him, one for the making of bricks and tiles, and two for the production of lime and plaster. In 1676, despite the opposition of the wig-makers, a privilege for the manufacture and sale of a new type of wigs was issued to Jean Quentin. To Lievens and Clément, Dutch Protestants from Zeeland, was given a privilege for the preparation of tobacco, in 1672. Charles de Laune, of Lannion, in Brittany, secured a twenty-year privilege, in 1665, for the use of a new type of mill, which was to make oil from hemp and other seeds. Lime plants near Pineau were granted privileges in the years 1665 to 1668. And dozens of other industries of more or less importance were given some form of encouragement.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>223</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 476-77, 568, 594-95; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 650; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 1, decree of June 3, 1671; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 174; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 610-611; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 263, 280.

<sup>224</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 172-73, 196; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,744, fol. 142; Boislisle, *Correspondance des contrôleurs-généraux*, I, 316; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 188-89, 236-37; Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 43; II<sup>2</sup>, 852-53.

## 7. SUMMARY

In view of the lack of statistics, it is impossible to estimate with any accuracy the effect of all Colbert's efforts in behalf of French industries, great and small. It can be said with some assurance that he successfully introduced into France the manufacture of a number of products that were not being made there in 1661. It is clear that through aid from him a number of industries already established in France were greatly expanded. It is certain that the total domestic production and the export trade of France were much increased under Colbert. But such statements do not give an adequate idea of his tremendous accomplishment, especially since there leap to mind a dozen particular instances in which he met with partial or complete failure.

Nor is an analysis of the value of the methods employed by Colbert much more satisfactory. Where he succeeded, it cannot be said with certainty that other methods would not have worked better, or that the industry would not have been introduced, and would not have prospered without any attention from the government. Business men heard of the favors that were being granted and, if they were thinking of starting a new enterprise or expanding an old one, naturally enough applied for privileges and help. On the other hand, it cannot be said that where Colbert failed, any other methods or approach would have succeeded better. Given the inertia of the populace, the traditionalism of the business men, the opposition from foreign nations, and from every quarter at home, it is amazing that Colbert met with as much success as he did.

It may be impossible to reach definitive conclusions, but the impression that arises from a prolonged study of the material involved is that Colbert accomplished a great deal in the field of industry, that he gave France a tremendous push in the direction of industrialism and industrial self-sufficiency, and that he brought control of the world trade in manufactured goods within reaching distance for his native land. Two statements, difficult to establish but almost certainly true, may bring home the magnitude of Colbert's accomplishment: France, despite a thousand obstacles, had become in 1683 the leading nation of the world in industrial productivity. From 1683 to the inauguration of the five-year plan by the Soviet government in Russia, no conscious and directed effort to develop a nation's industrial life was so prolonged, so thorough, so permeating, so far-reaching as that of Colbert.

## XII

### THE REGULATION OF INDUSTRY

ANY attempt to discuss Colbert's regulation of industry separately from his encouragement of it would have seemed to him foolish, for to Colbert regulation was not only a concomitant of such encouragement, but also an essential part of it. Colbert was convinced that it was chiefly by quality that manufactured goods could gain and retain a market, both at home and abroad. Quality, he was sure, could be obtained only through the promulgation and enforcement by the central government of carefully drawn regulations. Such regulations would put the industries of the nation into a state of "good order" which he ardently desired. They would protect the domestic consumer from fraud and deceit in the articles he bought. They would improve standards of quality and spread sound technical information as to new and better industrial procedures. In short, French industry could be restored and built up, only if it were properly regulated.<sup>1</sup>

Colbert felt that this regulation must be maintained by the government, since the business men were a shortsighted, selfish, grasping lot, ever ready to sacrifice national interests and ultimate benefits for immediate individual profits. Two quotations from his letters will serve to make his attitude clear. On one occasion he wrote to an intendant thus:

All merchants, as a rule, wish to have complete liberty in everything that has to do with their trade, and especially in manufactures, of which they wish always to change and reduce the lengths, widths, and qualities for consideration of some small profit which they make, a thing which tends to the complete ruin of manufactures, of which the principle consists, in a state as flourishing and as great as this, in making them always equal in length, width, and goodness.

To attain this degree of fidelity, it is necessary to go entirely beyond the arguments of little individual interests, which do not deserve consideration in connection with the general arguments as to the good of the state.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, cclvii; II<sup>a</sup>, 590, and *passim*; cf. J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant*, II, 23; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 839.

<sup>2</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 728-29.

Or again, he wrote to another intendant:

In the kingdom, I have always found the manufacturers stubborn in continuing the errors and abuses which they commit in their manufacturing. But when authority is used to make them carry out new regulations, both for width and length and for sound manufacture and dyeing, they have seen their manufacturing increase notably, and foreigners come to buy their products in the kingdom a great deal more than before; so it is necessary to be ready to use firmness and authority to overcome the stubbornness of the manufacturers.<sup>3</sup>

In the name of national interest and their own good, Colbert was therefore prepared to employ the power of the state to regiment the industrial producers. Most commentators on Colbert have singled out his regulation of industry for condemnation. They have admitted the purity of his motives—to keep up quality, to win markets, to protect the consumer, to improve techniques. But they have lamented the unwisdom of his efforts, the hampering of industry, the indignities put upon business men, the restraint of change and progress, the violations of liberty, the interference of the government in the economic life of the country. For these writers, brought up in a tradition of *laissez faire* thinking, such a stand was almost inevitable, since Colbert ignored almost every canon of economic dogma made sacred by the Manchester school. Even sympathetic historians have felt called upon to flay Colbert. Clément, for example, remarked in a sort of *obiter dictum* that the government should have been pitiless in enforcing regulations against merchants who broke them “in a manner harmful to the public health.” But he went on to say:

Aside from that, a complete and limitless liberty should have been left to workers and manufacturers, at their own risk and peril, and the same to buyers at their own risk and peril.

The regulations of Colbert on the quality and dimensions of textiles, as on guilds and masterships, were . . . a most vexing stain on his administration, and by a deplorable chance it was on this point alone that his successors sought to imitate him.<sup>4</sup>

Or take the most recent and authoritative writer on Colbert, M. Boissonnade. He is full of admiration for Colbert and his work, but he can not quite bring himself to approve the regulatory aspects of that work. He apologizes for Colbert, because he lacked “a sense of liberty” and

<sup>3</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 614–15.

<sup>4</sup> Clément, *Le Gouvernement de Louis XIV*, p. 197; cf. Clément, *Colbert*, pp. 235–36. The last statement is, of course, incorrect.

because his endeavors were marked by "the excessive authoritarianism which prevailed under the absolute monarchy." He considers Colbert's regulations as at least partly a mistake, made inevitable by the ideas and nature of seventeenth-century France.<sup>5</sup>

Now it is not beyond the function of a historian to bestow praise and blame, or to apologize for a great figure and point out his mistakes. But it is probably impossible to say of something as complex in its origin, development, and results as Colbert's industrial regulation that it was right or wrong, helpful or harmful, wise or ill-advised. What is clear is that Colbert was the instrument or focus of great historical trends, which were working themselves out. That his efforts in turn shaped subsequent history is almost certain. But as to what would have happened had he never lived, one can only guess with futile curiosity.

*The background of Colbert's regulations.*—From early medieval times the guilds had drawn up "statutes and regulations" intended to govern their corporate life, to prescribe conditions of labor, to prevent unfair competition, to preserve their industrial and commercial monopolies, to protect the consumer, and, in a broad sense, to ensure a modicum of economic justice. Sometimes the motives were perverted, and the statutes became instruments tending toward the exploitation of the apprentice, the journeyman, or the consumer. But whether the objectives were pure or not, the guilds from the earliest times found it advantageous to have some firmer basis for their regulations than the mere consent of their members. Thus it became normal, even when some grant was not necessary to secure a corporate existence, for the guild to turn to feudal authorities for approval and ratification of their statutes. The authority might be a town government, a feudal noble, a bishop with feudal rights, or in some cases the king. As disputes between competing guilds, or between guildsmen and outsiders, became more common, this sanction from a higher authority took on added significance. It gradually became common for guild statutes to be approved not only by a local authority, but also by the king, for thus they seemed to have more force. Once the kings realized that money could be secured in return for the grant of such confirmation, the crown was quite prepared to encourage the guilds to seek it.

There was likewise a tradition of regulation to secure honesty and justice in business on the part of the Church, through moral pressure

<sup>5</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 229, 286, cf. pp. 242, 216.

and through the ecclesiastical courts. The municipal governments also felt it their duty to regulate prices and business practice for the good of the town and the protection of the consumer. Thus there were several sources for the widespread belief in France that business should be subjected to controls of one sort or another. From the thirteenth century on, there was a tendency, which became notable in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for the royal government to take over and absorb functions formerly belonging to the church, the town, the guild, or other feudal authorities. This tendency, which has been called *étatisme*, was almost as noticeable in the economic as in the political sphere.

Thus it was that as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries royal enactments regulating or controlling industry had begun to appear. By the sixteenth century such legislation was common, though it is frequently very difficult to tell whether its chief purpose was to remove economic abuses or to raise money for the king. On the one hand, the king was confirming statutes and regulations of guilds drawn up by the guild members, with or without the coöperation of local authorities. On the other, he was issuing laws designed to regulate some phase of business activity in an area restricted or wide. In the matter of woolens, for example, regulatory legislation was issued by the king of France in 1479, 1512, 1531, 1543, 1553, 1567, 1571, 1577, 1582, 1583, and 1584. The motives usually advanced for the laws had to do with the preservation of quality, the reform of abuses, and the protection of the public. But fiscality was frequently involved, as for instance in the laws of 1582-84.

How clearly this regulation foreshadowed that of Colbert may be seen in the case of the royal ordinance of 1571, for it set standards of quality, the dimensions of woolen fabrics, and the number of threads in the warp, and was intended to have effect all over France. Nor was it only for woolens that these early regulations were issued. Silks, linens, hemp textiles, leather goods, dyeing, food products, tiles, plaster, and a dozen other products were subject to similar enactments. The edict of January, 1586, on hemp and linen fabrics, was general in effect, and sought, in behalf of the consumer, the honest manufacturer, and the export trade, to regulate the abuses that had crept into the industry. It provided that the fabrics were to be restored to their old-time dimensions, that they were to be marked with lead seals by royal inspectors, that they were to be measured by sworn aulnagers, and so forth.

Even though these regulations were not enforced with any thoroughness, and even though they were often merely an excuse to create offices which might be sold, still they represented both a tendency and a precedent. As the monarchy grew stronger and the political life of the nation more centralized under Henry IV and Louis XIII (Richelieu), the trend toward regulation of economic life by the central government continued. That the regulations of Colbert were no new departure in French history was clearly recognized in the eighteenth century. The *Dictionnaire de commerce*, for example, says:

Although it was not, properly speaking, until the reign of Louis XIV and the ministry of M. Colbert, superintendent of arts and manufactures, that the making of woollens and other similar fabrics began to be pushed to that degree of perfection which it has finally attained and which no longer permits us to regret the foreign products, there were, nevertheless, several kings of France who, from time to time had regulations drawn up to perfect the manufactures of woollens and to maintain the number of threads or the size that the cloths made in them should have.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the long history of government regulation, Colbert found when he came to power that few of the regulations were being enforced. In the face of domestic and foreign competition, and under conditions long made difficult by war, the manufacturers of France were making the best of matters, each in his own way. The guild regulations were still in force, but they were frequently evaded; they did not apply to individual producers in many areas, and they perpetuated wide divergences of all sorts. Colbert was determined to bring some sort of order out of what seemed to him chaos, and to secure as much uniformity as the circumstances permitted.

But wholly aside from Colbert, there were forces at work in the same direction. The strengthening of the central government, which had ensued after the close of the religious wars, and had been halted only temporarily by the troubles of the Fronde, became an outstanding factor of the first decades of the personal rule of Louis XIV. The political power of the king expanded rapidly, at the expense of nobility

<sup>6</sup> J. Savary des Bruslons, and P.-L. Savary, *Dictionnaire universel*, IV, 426 ff.; Gailhard-Bancel, *Les Anciennes Corporations de métiers*, pp. 1-36, and *passim*; Boissonnade, *Le socialisme d'état*, pp. 95-151; Germain Martin, *La Grande Industrie sous le règne de Louis XIV*, pp. 154-57; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,791, fols. 22, 155; *Recueil des règlements*, I, 28-41, and *passim*. This work will hereafter be cited as *Rec. des règ.* See also sup. I, 3-5; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 3-17; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,741, fols. 30-33, 39-42; Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 272-74.



and Church, province and municipality. It was a period of *étatisme* triumphant. Under the circumstances, it was not unnatural that a parallel extension of the royal power should take place in the economic sphere. The mercantilist theories, the connection between taxation and industrial productivity, the desire to prevent labor troubles and riots, the creation of a more effective machinery of government, the decay of the older authorities, the exigencies of international competition, the paternalistic wish to protect the public, all tended to lead the government further and further into the field of economic regulation.<sup>7</sup> Even groups that might have been expected to oppose such economic *étatisme* were moved by the pressure of contemporary developments. On September 7, 1668, for example, the *Parlement* of Paris issued a decree forbidding those holding feudal rights to grant statutes to any guild. Such statutes were to be granted only by the king, so as to avoid "a diversity of regulations very harmful to the good order of the aforesaid arts and crafts."<sup>8</sup>

Impelled both by his own convictions and by the trend of the times, Colbert set himself the task of regulating the industrial life of France. In working toward this end he made no break with the past, but sought to use the methods and the instrumentalities hallowed by long tradition. The vital differences between Colbert's regulation and that of the earlier period were two. First, his was organized and persistent, rather than sporadic. Second, he made a real attempt to see that the regulations were enforced, rather than trusting vaguely to the unaided power of royal mandates and haphazard administration.

One key to Colbert's regulation was the fact that he used guilds where they existed, and tried to create them where they did not. Colbert's work in generalizing guild organization will be discussed later in this chapter. A second point necessary to an understanding of what Colbert did is his employment of two different kinds of regulations, those that were local and those that were general. In the former he

<sup>7</sup> The comparison with England at exactly the same period is perhaps of some significance. After 1660 the machinery of the old absolutist government (an effective Privy Council, prerogative courts, and so forth), as created by the Tudors, was not restored. The tendency was rather toward a decentralized administration, in regard to home affairs at least. Probably for this reason, among others, government regulation of the economic life of the nation—manufacturing, internal trade, prices, wages, poor relief, and so on—was much less effective and important than it had been under James I and Charles I.

<sup>8</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,791, fol. 181.

was merely putting the central government in the place of the older local authorities. In the latter he was merely carrying on the well-established tradition of royal regulation. But in both cases his work was significantly more effective than anything that had preceded it.

By far the greater number of Colbert's regulations were local in scope. Sometimes, a guild, or a group of manufacturers who wished to form a guild, sought and obtained through Colbert royal authorization for their statutes and regulations. More frequently, Colbert in one way or another, got the manufacturers to ask for such royal authorization, and through his agents helped in the preparation of the new statutes. Often Colbert had statutes and regulations prepared when he felt they were needed and imposed them by royal authority on a guild or industry that was more or less unwilling. In any case, Colbert brought to bear on the statutes the best technical opinion that he could get. Further, the fact that the local regulations passed through the hands of the central government tended to modify them in the direction of greater uniformity.

But to secure the good order and the uniformity of which he dreamed, local regulations were not enough. Particularly in the fields of textile manufacturing and dyeing, Colbert had prepared and issued regulations that were general in scope, designed to apply to all France, and intended to bring a degree of uniformity to a whole industry. Certain conditions made it almost inevitable that Colbert should seek to enforce such general regulations. First, he was never able to bring all industrial producers into guilds, and the best way to force these outsiders to live up to certain standards seemed to be by nation-wide legislation. Second, Colbert was busily setting up *manufactures royales*, which were in many cases exempt from guild supervision. For some of them special regulations were issued. For others the general regulations seemed better suited. Third, Colbert was impatient to get results and the issuance of general regulations probably seemed to him a quicker method than the formulation of separate ones for each guild and each locality.

#### I. LOCAL REGULATIONS

More of Colbert's regulations, both special and general, were directed toward the manufacture of textiles than toward any other phase of industry. And of the textile regulations, most had to do with woolens of one sort or another. It was during the years 1666 and 1667 that

most of the special regulations on woolens were issued. In fact it might almost be said that in those years Colbert made a concerted drive to bring the woolen manufactures under regulations, devised, in part at least, by the central government. In the preparation of the new "statutes and regulations," Colbert played an active part. He sent Guy Pocquelin and François de la Croix to Reims, Châlons, Saint-Lo, Chartres, and Illiers, to superintend the drawing up of new regulations in those towns. To Amiens he sent Le Correur and Chesnard, while other agents were dispatched in the same years to other localities. Apparently the agents in some cases took with them basic regulations which were to be adapted to local needs through consultation with the merchants and manufacturing-masters involved.<sup>9</sup>

*Varied procedure.*—But the process by which the regulations were drawn up varied from town to town. A few examples will serve to illustrate both the general method and the variations in the formulation of the local woolen-textile regulations. On November 12, 1665, a large meeting of officials, fullers, merchants, and the wardens of the guild of merchant serge-makers was held at Aumale, in the presence of the bailiff of the duchy. A letter from Colbert was read. In it he said that

having learned that the manufacture of serges at Aumale had been for some years so disorganized, the workers having complete liberty to make their fabrics of numerous lengths and widths according to whim, that the sale of goods, because of their defective quality had notably diminished, to the great injury of public and private interests; he was sending the sieur Perrot to examine with us [the local merchants, and so forth] the ways of re-invigorating the old Statutes and Regulations, and in case there were none, or those which had been made needed to be reformed because of pressing considerations, to draw up projects and regulations, and for that purpose to call together the merchant-manufactures of the vicinity and to get their advice, so that everything being reported to him, he might have them authorized by the Council.

After the reading of the letter the bailiff told the master weavers and the fullers to draw up articles of regulation immediately. This was done. Regulations were worked out in forty-six articles, and they were approved by the Council of State on August 23, 1666.<sup>10</sup>

At Amiens the regulations for the makers of sagathy, the *haute-lisseurs*, the wool spinners, and the fullers, were drawn up at a local

<sup>9</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 212-13.

<sup>10</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 408 ff.

assembly held on Colbert's orders. These new regulations seem to have involved several different guilds and to have replaced, to some degree, older guild statutes.<sup>11</sup> At Sedan a meeting of the *maire*, *échevins*, and manufacturers was convoked on August 24, 1666, by Thomas Renard de Fusseberg, commissioner for the reformation of waters and forests, and an agent of Colbert. It was announced that since the privilege of Cadeau, who had so long dominated the manufacture of fine cloth there, had expired, the king was going to leave the industry free and open to all. In addition, the king was prepared to grant a bounty of 100 *livres* for each new loom put into operation for the making of fine cloth, by Cadeau or anyone else. But these things were to be done only on the condition that statutes and regulations be drawn up under Renard's guidance, that at least 60 looms, in addition to Cadeau's, be in operation at the end of the year, and that none of the merchants deal directly or indirectly in foreign cloth. Those present at the meeting agreed to the terms proposed "with submission and respect," and drew up regulations which were approved on September 24, 1666.<sup>12</sup>

On September 2, 1666, the sieurs Vitalis de Figuières, Bernard Viguier, François Ribals, and Pierre Taillant, *consuls* of the town of Carcassonne, appeared before the *lieutenant-général* of the *sénéchaussée* of Carcassonne and Béziers, and said that they had received orders from the king to examine the state of the manufacture of cloth at Carcassonne, Saptès, and Conques, and to seek ways to improve it. A meeting of the merchants, weavers, entrepreneurs (including Varennes), and manufacturers of these places was held, in the presence of the *lieutenant-général*. Articles of regulation were drawn up and agreed to, and confirmation by the king requested. The confirmation was granted on October 26, 1666. A royal decree of March 10, 1667, modified the regulations somewhat. It provided that no one was to be received as a master unless he had served a regular apprenticeship, that the masters already received were not to be held to keep two looms in operation, and that confiscation, rather than public exposure, should be the penalty for defective goods.<sup>13</sup>

At Saint-Lo the *lieutenant-général*, by "sound of trumpet," assembled the chief officials, cloth and serge-makers, merchants and weavers, on September 25, 1666, and read to them a letter from Colbert dated

<sup>11</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 218 ff., and especially 255; *Dictionnaire de commerce*, IV, 426 ff.

<sup>12</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 540-55.

<sup>13</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, III, 215 ff.; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 322-24.

November 5, 1665. In the letter Colbert announced that the sieur Pocquelin was being sent there by the king to examine and improve the manufactures. They were to help him in his work. Despite these instructions, Pocquelin had secured no coöperation from the townsfolk. So Colbert had written again ordering them, in the king's name, to aid him, and to draw up statutes and regulations immediately. A project of the regulations, as drawn up in consultation with Pocquelin, was then read. Whereupon:

They said and declared, all with one voice, that they were ready to obey and execute the orders of the king as they have always done. And after having had read in a loud and intelligible voice the aforesaid letter of the aforementioned sieur Colbert, all the aforesaid inhabitants and master serge-makers, weavers, and others said to us [i.e., Charles le Meunier, the *lieutenant-général*] that in truth the manufacture of this city had greatly decreased, both from the continuance of the wars, and the few flocks of sheep to be found in the country, and from the frequent lodging of soldiers made up till now upon this city, and the subsidies raised and being raised there, by means of which the manufacture bade fair to be diminished by nearly half, its workers being scattered here and there, and having gone to other places to try to earn a living and to maintain themselves and their families and that well and properly to reëstablish the aforesaid manufacture in the aforesaid city, so that it may be as flourishing as ever, or more so, they have, under the good pleasure of His Majesty, had drawn up and written down the following regulations in conformity with those which were projected with the aforesaid Pocquelin.

The new regulations were based on the old statutes drawn up by the master serge-makers of the town on January 21, 1583, but changes were made to allow for new types of cloth. The older regulations had been made so that the workers might work "conveniently, methodically, and with greater perfection." Since the same was the purpose of the new regulations, it was found advisable to set standards for the length, width, and warps of the fabrics.<sup>14</sup>

In November, 1666, the sieurs Guy Pocquelin and François de la Croix, merchant drapers of Paris, appeared in the town of Illiers, bearing a letter from Colbert to the bailiff, Louis Péan. From the visitors and the letter Péan learned that the king was anxious to build up the manufactures of the kingdom and that for this purpose he had had the goodness to prevent the entry into France of foreign cloth and serge, so as to stimulate those of his subjects accustomed to make similar goods to

<sup>14</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 10 ff.

work harder, to do better than the foreigners, and to apply themselves more carefully to those fabrics which they are wont to make, because the cloths will be more easily sold than formerly, and also to retain in France the great sums that go out of it by the entry of the aforesaid foreign cloth and serge, to the great injury of his subjects and the decrease of commerce.

The bailiff was further informed that Colbert had assembled the merchant drapers of Paris and asked their advice on the matter. They had told him that the best thing he could do was to send skilled persons to inspect the various manufactures of the kingdom, and to regulate the length and width of the textiles made, the quality of the wool, the methods of manufacture, and the relations between masters, journeymen, and apprentices. In accordance with this advice, Pocquelin and La Croix had been sent out. After the situation had been thus explained to the bailiff Péan, he assembled at the Château of Illiers, on November 26, the chief persons interested in the manufacture of serge. Pocquelin addressed the meeting and explained what had caused the decrease in the sale of the serges of the town and what could be done to reëstablish their reputation. Colbert's letter was read. The assembly thereupon decided to thank the king for his interest in industry and in Illiers,

in which formerly the trade in serges was very great, but has ceased of late years because of the overgreat burden of the *tailles*, the passage of soldiers, deaths, and poor crops, and especially because of the great number of debts with which this little community is laden, which amount to more than 20,000 *livres*, because of which the good inhabitants and workers have been forced to leave and to go to dwell in neighboring places.

And His Majesty is begged to discharge the aforesaid town of Illiers of its debts and of the excessive taxation of the *taille*, and to continue his royal protection for the business men; by which means trade will be re-established in the aforesaid town.

The assembly also thanked Colbert and asked him to continue "the honor of his benevolence" to the town. At the same meeting, statutes and regulations were adopted. They seem to have been drawn up by Pocquelin and La Croix, in conjunction with the local merchants and masters. They were confirmed by royal decree and letters patent of February 26, 1667.<sup>15</sup>

At Reims, Pocquelin and La Croix had more trouble. Arriving there in October, 1666, they told the *maire* to summon the chief merchants to a meeting. But these latter, hearing that it was a question of new

<sup>15</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 22 ff.

regulations, absented themselves and only a group of unimportant business men came to the gathering. They listened while Pocquelin read the new regulations and then protested in a lively fashion. The assemblée broke up, after having accomplished nothing. Two days later Pocquelin and La Croix called another meeting of the big merchants and the guild wardens. Only four wardens appeared, and they declared that nothing could be done unless a meeting of the entire cloth trade were held. If this were done, they declared, there would be a great deal of trouble with the weavers. The municipal officials tried to influence a selected group of wardens and merchants to work on and accept the regulations, but to no avail. Finally the general meeting was called. But Pocquelin and La Croix, saying that they were unable to wait for it, had the new regulations signed by the municipal authorities and went their way. These new statutes and regulations were not approved and confirmed by royal letters patent until September 13, 1669.<sup>16</sup>

On November 5, 1666, Colbert addressed a letter to the *maire* and *échevins* of Beauvais, to tell them that he was sending thither the sieur Pocquelin, to inspect the manufactures of the town and to draw up such regulations that its textiles would be improved and would enjoy a "more prompt sale." Colbert told the officials to coöperate with him in every way. Whether Pocquelin got there or not, is not clear. But, at any rate, on February 2, 1667, the *maire* held a meeting at the Hôtel de Ville of Beauvais. He read a letter from Colbert dated January 24, 1667, in which the minister announced that he was sending statutes and regulations for the woolen industry of the town, and directed the *maire* to hold a big meeting so that these might be fully discussed. On February 4 the *maire* held a larger meeting, to which were summoned all those engaged in the woolen industry. Colbert's letter and the new statutes were read. The new regulations were apparently based on older ones, drawn up before August 30, 1661. The meeting thanked the king and Colbert for their interest and asked to have the new statutes confirmed. This was done on February 26, 1667.<sup>17</sup>

At Elbeuf, on April 19, 1667, a meeting of those interested in the manufacture of cloth approved without change the articles sent them by Colbert for the regulation of their industry and declared themselves

<sup>16</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 212-13; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 349; *Rec. des règ.*, II, 494-511.

<sup>17</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 177 ff.; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 290; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,739, fols. 137-46.

ready to be bound by them.<sup>18</sup> At Chartres, Pocquelin and La Croix again played a part in the adoption of new regulations. They arrived there at the end of November, 1666, bearing a letter from Colbert dated September 6. They got in touch with the *maire* and *échevins*, explained their mission, and arranged for a meeting. Pocquelin addressed the meeting, Colbert's letter was read, and the assembly voted its thanks to the king and Colbert and asked that the new regulations be confirmed.<sup>19</sup>

Very similar to the regulations for Chartres were those for serge-making at Brou. They were drawn up in Paris by Pocquelin and La Croix, with the aid of a representative of the serge-makers involved. They were confirmed by royal decree on December 6, 1667.<sup>20</sup> At Bayeux the regulations for the manufacture of cloth and serge were drawn up at a local assembly on April 11, 1668, and confirmed by royal decree on May 30 of the same year. Though the regulations do not mention the presence of outside advisers, they contain many articles similar to, or partly identical with, those of the regulations for Elbeuf, Chartres, Illiers, and Brou.<sup>21</sup>

By 1668 the spate of special regulations slackened somewhat, and the need for them was soon lessened by the issuance of general regulations. In 1670 and thereafter there are instances of special regulations, but usually instead of a formal drawing up of "statutes and regulations" for the industry of a town, the central government made local modifications in the general regulations by means of decrees dealing with specific problems. Sometimes such decrees had to do with a whole category of textiles. For instance, on September 16, 1670, a decree was issued, as a result of a long dispute between the serge-makers and drapers on one hand and the linen weavers on the other. Both parties were claiming the exclusive right to sell *droguets*, *tiretaines*, and other fabrics of which the warp was composed of linen, or hemp, and the woof of wool. On Colbert's advice, the decree gave permission to all concerned to sell these textiles, but provided that they must have red selvages, so that the consumer would not mistake them for all wool fabrics, and that the weaver must work his name into each piece.<sup>22</sup>

Or again, the decree might apply to a single town, as for example one of November 18, 1673, which permitted the serge-makers of Bolbec to manufacture serges  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ells wide, rather than  $\frac{2}{3}$  ell wide, since

<sup>18</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 52-64.

<sup>20</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 65-76.

<sup>22</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 303-4.

<sup>19</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 37-52.

<sup>21</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 77-94.



they found a good sale for the wider fabrics.<sup>23</sup> Sometimes the decree applied to a whole region. The king, having been informed of abuses in the manufacture of cloth in Languedoc for sale in the Levant and "desiring to establish order both for the manufacture and the quality of the aforesaid cloth, so as to maintain in foreign lands the reputation that the manufactures of the kingdom have acquired," on Colbert's advice issued a decree on May 15, 1676. It provided for three grades of cloth for the Levant trade: *fins*, of pure Segovia wool; *refins*, with the warp of Segovia and the woof of local wool; and *communs*, entirely of local wool. Such cloths were to be  $1\frac{1}{6}$  ells wide and clearly marked with the grade, the name of the weaver, the place of manufacture, and an indication that the goods were intended for export to the Levant.<sup>24</sup>

Sometimes a decree might be desired for a special part of the manufacturing process. In 1682 Van Robais and other manufacturers at Amiens were clamoring for such a decree. They wished to have the calendering of *baracans* made obligatory. Breteuil, the intendant at Amiens, conducted a series of experiments to determine whether such a decree was necessary. He took a number of calendered and uncalendered *baracans* and mixed them up. The merchants were unable to separate them. He dampened a number of uncalendered *baracans*, to see if they curled up, as Van Robais said they would. They did not. He had a number of calendered and uncalendered *baracans* wet, then dried, part of them in the sun, part in the shade. The calendered fabrics showed no superiority over the others. Breteuil was convinced, therefore, that the decree was unnecessary. But he felt that the tests had been worth while, to undeceive Van Robais and the others.<sup>25</sup>

The special regulations issued in such numbers before 1669 were in general more important and more elaborate than the later decrees. From the point of view of governmental activity, they mark a transition stage in which the state, while playing a greater part in their formulation, and while insisting on greater uniformity as between localities, was still working on a local basis, rather than trying to prepare and enforce regulations that were national in scope. From the point of view of content, they were likewise transitional between the older local statutes and the new general regulations, for while they were in many cases based directly on local guild statutes that had been evolved through

<sup>23</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 403-4.

<sup>24</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, III, 122-24.

<sup>25</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 84, letter from Breteuil to Colbert, September 20, 1682.

the centuries, they were modified toward national uniformity through the work of Colbert's agents, such as Pocquelin and La Croix. The regulations for serge-making for Chartres, Illiers, Brou, and Elbeuf, all drawn up between November, 1666, and November, 1667, were, for example, strikingly alike in form and content. Most of the local regulations issued under Colbert dealt with textiles, and most of the textile regulations had to do with fabrics either wholly or partly of wool. They were almost all drawn up under the auspices of the central government and imposed on more or less receptive local industries by governmental authority. But there was usually some prior consultation with the persons affected, though it might consist only of a formal meeting of a few leading merchants, held in the presence of royal or municipal officials.<sup>20</sup>

*The regulations for Beauvais.*—The statutes and regulations for the cloth and serge manufacturers of Beauvais, drawn up under Colbert's influence and probably with the advice and aid of Pocquelin, may serve as typical of the form and content of the special regulations. They were approved by a special meeting at Beauvais on February 4, 1667, and confirmed by the king on the twenty-sixth of the month. At Beauvais the serge-makers and cloth-makers formed a single guild, within which the former held a subordinate rank, had less capital, hired fewer workers, and made the cheaper grades of woolens. But a successful serge-maker could easily pass to the higher grade and become a cloth-maker. The only suitable way to show what a special regulation was like is to present, article by article, an analysis of the contents of one of them. The special statutes and regulations for Beauvais contained fifty-six articles, which may be summarized thus:

1. No working, buying, or selling on Sundays or holy days.
2. Guild to be composed of all masters working in the city or suburbs of Beauvais before January 1, 1666. Such masters to register at the city hall and with the guild, and to agree to observe the present statutes.
3. Masters from out of town or from foreign lands to be received in the guild, if they give proof that they had been masters elsewhere, or to serve an apprenticeship of three years in Beauvais if they cannot do so. For the reception of such masters the fee to be 45 *sous*, with no additional banquets or expenses. All foreigners received in the guild to be considered as naturalized Frenchmen.
4. Sons of masters to need no certificate of apprenticeship if they have

<sup>20</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 209-11; *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 22-76.

worked with their fathers for two years, but to be received in the guild they must be at least fifteen years old.

5. Widows of masters to enjoy the same rights as their husbands.

6. Ten *boujonneurs* [local name for wardens] to be elected, five from the united guild of cloth and serge-makers, three from the weavers, and two from the nappers. [At Beauvais the master cloth-makers and, to a lesser degree, the serge-makers were minor capitalists, with weavers, shearers, carders, nappers, and spinners working for them in their shops or at home.]

7. The wardens to visit the houses of the cloth and serge-makers at least once a week, so that each such house is visited at least every month.

8. Wardens to report to the *échevin* of the town in charge of such matters for the week, and to the local administrative judge.

9. The guild to have an office in the city hall. The wardens and *échevins* to keep it open daily for the inspection of cloth, for at least one hour in the morning and one in the afternoon. The inspection fee to be 2 *sous* a piece. If the cloth is of requisite quality, it is to be marked with a lead seal bearing on one side the arms of the king and the words *Louis XIV, Restaurateur des arts et manufactures*, and on the other side the arms of the city of Beauvais and the words *Fabrique de Beauvais*. If the cloth is judged defective, it is to be fulled again. After that, if it is still found defective, it is not to be marked or sold, but is to be straightway cut into four pieces.

10. Wardens to make general inspections of the work place of each master once a year. The fee for such an inspection to be 5 *sous*.

11. Masters must open their shops, workrooms, and storerooms to wardens. If any defective goods are found, the wardens are to seize them and take them before *échevins*. If adjudged truly defective, the cloth is to be confiscated, and the master fined for a second or further offenses.

12. No unmarked cloth to be sold, bought, or kept.

13. Any fuller who spoils a piece of cloth, or causes it to shrink below the required specifications, is to be fined by the administrative judge (*judge de la police*), on the advice of the *échevins*.

14. The wardens not to undertake any lawsuit in behalf of the guild without the advice of the twelve oldest members and of the *échevins*.

15. Wardens to meet twice a year to discuss affairs and settle guild accounts.

16. Three years' apprenticeship to be requisite to become a master. Apprenticeship may be under a carder, shearer, napper, or weaver, all weavers being reputed serge-makers, and vice versa.

17. If an apprentice loses his master by death or otherwise, wardens and *échevins* to provide him with another.

18. No master to take more than two apprentices.

19. Number of threads in the warp of serges à deux envers (with two wrong sides) fixed. Such serges to be 36 ells long before fulling, 26 to 33

ells long after fulling, according to quality. Ells to be those of Paris. Looms to be adjusted to make serges of the required specifications. Selvages to be woven. Width to be at least one ell after fulling, when the serge is ready for sale, and not to shrink further. The purchasers to be allowed to test this by putting the fabric in water.

20. White *ratines* to have same specifications as above serges, but the selvages may be sewed, rather than woven.

21. Wide *ratines* to have a fixed number of threads in the warp. To be 30 to 34 ells long and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{3}$  ells wide when finished.

22. Spanish-style serges to have a fixed number of threads in the warp. White ones to be 28 to 31 ells long and 1 ell wide when finished. Gray ones to be 24 to 27 ells long and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ells wide when finished.

23. *Revêches*, both white and English-style, to have a fixed number of threads in the warp. To be at least 21 ells long, and to be  $\frac{3}{4}$  ell wide when finished.

24. White and gray serges to be all wool, to have a fixed number of threads in the warp, to be 21 ells long, and one ell wide, not counting the selvages, when finished.

25. Serges, knitted style, to have a fixed number of threads in the warp, to be 20 to 21 ells long, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  ell and no more wide, when finished.

26. The wardens of the carders to visit the workshops of the drapers, to inspect the work of the master and journeymen carders.

27. Wool for the warp to be dried in a specified fashion.

28. Weaver to weave into the top of each piece of cloth the initial of the first name and the whole surname of the person to whom the cloth belongs [i.e., the master for whom he is working].

29. Weavers not to use damp and dry wool in the same woof, under penalty of a 6 *livres* fine.

30. If a weaver makes a poor selvaige, 5 *sous* fine.

31. If a weaver leaves a piece of cloth dirty and mussy, 2 *sous* fine.

32. Weavers must make over all small spots where the work was sloppy. One *sou* fine.

33. Weavers to pay one *sou* fine for each shuttle hole.

34. If a weaver makes the distance between the threads of the warp unequal, 6 *deniers* fine; or, in bad cases, 2 *sous*.

35. If the warp is not tight, 2 *sous* 6 *deniers* fine.

36. If a piece unevenly woven, 5 *sous* fine.

37. No weaver to leave his master until he has finished the piece on his loom, and until he has paid his master all he owes him.

38. Master not to dismiss worker without four days' notice. No master cloth or serge-maker to induce a worker to leave another master. Ten *livres* fine.

39. Masters can hire such journeymen as they see fit, even out-of-town or foreign ones. No one is to interfere with this right, under penalty of a

fine of 100 *livres*. But in hiring, masters are to give preference to local workers, if they work in a docile fashion and according to the masters' wishes. In any dispute, the master's word is to be taken as against that of the worker.

40. All weavers, shearers, carders, nappers, and spinners who are working in Beauvais are to work for masters of the city and its *faubourgs*, in preference to masters of other places.

41. No tavern or innkeeper is to allow any apprentice or journeymen "to eat, drink, or play" on his premises, on a working day, under penalty of 3 *livres* fine.

42. No cloth of certain specified higher grades to be exposed for sale, unless it is marked with the "royal seal," nor is any unmarked cloth to be bought by anyone. Penalty, 100 *livres* fine.

43. Anyone counterfeiting a cloth mark, or putting a Beauvais mark on cloth not made in Beauvais, is to be proceeded against as a forger.

44. These statutes and regulations to be enforced in Beauvais and its *faubourgs* and for a distance of one league round about. They are to be printed and a copy given to each master in the area.

45. Serge-makers to be permitted to make cheap gray and white serges, at least 21 ells long, at most  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ells wide from medium quality wool, with no selvages.

46. Gray and white milled serges, Moüy style, made by the serge-makers with a fixed number of threads in the warp of  $\frac{5}{8}$  ell wide and at least  $20\frac{1}{2}$  ells long, to be well and carefully woven, under a penalty of 20 *sous* fine.

47. The baizes manufactured by the serge-makers to have a fixed number of threads in the warp, to be  $\frac{5}{8}$  ell wide and at least 21 ells long when finished, and to be especially well prepared, under penalty of a 20 *sous* fine.

48. All goods made by the serge-makers to be inspected and marked as provided above, but the mark to be the ordinary lead one of the city, rather than the "royal seal."

49. Wool brought into the city by merchants from outside to be exposed for sale only in the markets, under penalty of a 4 *livres* fine.

50. Merchants who buy wool for the purpose of selling it again not to go into the market before eleven o'clock in the morning, nor to engage or contract for wool before that time, under penalty of a 10 *livres* fine.

51. Wool merchants not to sell wool unless it is thoroughly dry; penalty, 50 *livres* fine. If any merchant sells unfairly mixed wool with concealed defects, the buyer is to call in the guild wardens. If they find that he has been cheated, they are to seize the wool, and take it before the presiding *échevin* for judgment.

52. Both serge and cloth-makers are to observe the decree of regulation of the *Parlement* of Paris, in so far as it does not conflict with these regulations.

53. No measurers (*aulneurs*) are to be brokers (*courtiers*), nor are

brokers to be agents or factors, nor are they to buy wool or goods from cloth or serge-makers for their own account, or for anyone else, to sell them again directly or indirectly.

54. Masters who are working for wages for other masters, because of their indigence, are not to buy, sell, contract for, or keep goods, wool, or tools put into their hands to be worked on or with. If they do, they are to be punished as thieving servants. In general they are to be subject to the same regulations as journeymen. Goods on which they or their journeymen or apprentices are working are not to be seized for their debts.

55. One-half of all fines to go to the poor of Beauvais; one-fourth to the wardens; and one-fourth to the guild for expenses.

56. Every two months there is to be held, at the episcopal palace, a general assembly for this industry. The *maire*, *échevins*, wardens, former wardens, chief merchants, and manufacturers, and most skilled merchants and manufacturers are to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to be to improve, perfect, and bring good order to the industry, to prevent abuses, and to send reports to M. Colbert.<sup>27</sup>

Some of the articles in this regulation are definitely medieval in tone and are such as might have been found in the statutes of almost any guild for centuries (articles 1, 4, 5, 15-18, 49, 50, 51, 53). Some show definite traces of the anxiety of the state to organize and expand the industry, even to the detriment of the interests of the masters (articles 2 and 3). Other articles reflect the growing tendency toward a capitalist type of industry and show obvious efforts to hold down and exploit the workers (articles 13, 30-37, 40, 41, 54, and especially 39). Many evidence the preoccupation of the state and of the guild with uniformity and high quality (articles 7-12, 19-29, 42-28, 56). A few show clearly the important rôle in industrial regulations played by the *échevins*, who were frequently former guild wardens (articles 8, 9, 11, 13, 14).

*Summary.*—By 1669 special regulations, more or less like those for Beauvais, had been prepared and confirmed for the textile industries of a large number of towns, including Paris, Lyon, Tours, Carcassonne, Sedan, Bourges, Romorantin, Issoudun, Châteauroux, Vierzon, Aubigny, La Sâlle, Saint-Lo, Saint-Genoust, Chartres, Verneuil, Dreux, Vire, Elbeuf, Illiers, Châlons, Beauvais, Amiens, Aumale, Grandvilliers, Crèvecœur, Blicourt, Bayeux, Reims, Caen, and Orléans. Some of the regulations were even shorter and simpler than those of Beauvais, and contained as few as 33 articles. Others, especially if they dealt with a

<sup>27</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 177-201; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 137-46.

wider variety of textiles, were much more complex. That of Amiens, for example, contained 248 articles.<sup>28</sup>

From time to time efforts were made to enlarge the scope of these special regulations. For instance, a decree of October 13, 1667, listed the regulations already prepared and confirmed, and declared that they had been put into force in all places where similar cloths were made, "so as to maintain these manufactures in a flourishing state." In most of the regulations were inserted clauses permitting masters from any other town easily to become masters of the place in question. Most significant, a decree of the Council of Commerce of April 11, 1669, copies of which were sent out with a circular letter to the officials of all localities which had regulations, and to all intendants, ordered the punctilious enforcement of the regulations.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. GENERAL REGULATIONS

It was no long step from the idea of generalizing special regulations to that of a general regulation. The idea of a general regulation was, moreover, by no means new. Indeed the edict of March, 1571, on woolens was so much like the general regulation of August, 1669, that it seems very likely that the latter was, to some degree, based on the former. Colbert's general regulation on woolens was no hastily prepared document. All the while that the special regulations were being prepared and issued, a committee, which included the administrative officials of the Châtelet and the wardens of the drapers of Paris, was busy with the investigations which led to the general regulation. It was only after seven years of work, in August, 1669, that the regulation was completed and ready for promulgation.<sup>30</sup>

*The woolens regulation.*—It was entitled "Ordonnances and regulations on the length, width, and quality of cloths, serges, and other stuffs of wool and linen." It was by far the most important of Colbert's industrial regulations, whether its scope, the number of workers affected, the size of the industry, the geographic areas involved, the efforts to enforce it, or any other criterion be used. Because of its importance, because Colbert's regulations are so frequently misunderstood, because

<sup>28</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 339-41; *Rec. des règ.*, IV, 158 ff.; sup. I, 1 ff.; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 348-50, 210-12; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 101-2.

<sup>29</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 339-41; *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 77 ff., and *passim*; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 101-2.

<sup>30</sup> AD XI, No. 43, *liasse* 1, edict of March, 1571; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 207.

the text is not easily available in French, and because no translation of it into English seems to exist, it does not seem inappropriate, despite the length of the document, to include a complete translation of it at this point. In no other way would it be possible adequately to indicate the nature, purpose, scope, and tone, of the regulation. There are fifty-nine articles in the regulation, of which the following is a rather literal translation:

1. All Spanish-style cloths, white, gray, or mixed, shall be made one and one-half ells wide including the selvaige, and the aforesaid selvages are not to be more than two inches wide. The piece is to be twenty-one ells long.

2. The seal cloths (*draps du sceau*) of Rouen, Darnetal, and Dieppe, the *seizans* of Sastes, and other ones of similar kind and quality, serges with heavy naps (*serges à poil*), Segovia serges, serges of Beauvais with naps and with two wrong sides (*à deux envers*), serges of Saint-Lo, Falaise, and Vendôme, *estamets* [a light woolen] and serges of Dreux, Neuilly, Orléans, and Troyes shall be one ell wide, and the piece twenty to twenty-one ells long.

3. The strong white cloths of Elboeuf, Romorantin, Bourges, Issoudun, Aubigny, Vierzon, Saint-Genoux, Laon, Salbry, Seignelay, and other places where similar ones are made, shall be one ell wide, including the selvages, and fourteen to fifteen ells long. And serges of Berry and Sologne, and the cloths of Reims, Châlons, and Chartres are to have the same width as the above-mentioned fabrics, and shall be twenty to twenty-one ells long.

4. The cloths of Châteauroux shall be one ell wide, the selvages included, and from ten and one-half to eleven ells long when they are sold by the piece.

5. The white cloths of Saint-Lubin, Gisors, and surrounding places shall be one and one-sixteenth ells wide between the selvages, and twenty-eight to thirty ells long. And the gray cloths of the above-mentioned Saint-Lubin and Gisors shall be one ell wide, the selvages included, and twenty ells long.

6. The cloths of Dreux, white and gray, of Vire, Dampierre, Cervillé, Blévy, Argentan, Ecouché, Valogne, Cherbourg, Verneuil au Perche, Senlis, Soissons, Meaux, Lisy, Méru, Château-Renard, Château-Renaud, Fourcarmont, Ancennes, Gamache, Auchy-le-Château, both fine and medium, shall be one ell wide, including the selvages, and thirty to thirty-two ells long.

7. The wide *ratines* [a fine woolen, with a woolly surface] of Rouen, Dieppe, Beauvais, and other places shall be one and one-third ells wide, including the selvages, and the narrow ones shall be one ell wide, and shall be fifteen to sixteen ells long; the half pieces and the double pieces in proportion.

8. The short-nap serges of Saint-Lo, those of Caen, Fresnes, Condé, and Falaise shall be one ell wide and thirty-five to forty ells long.

9. The London-style serges, white, gray, and mixed, which are made at



Seignelay, Abbéville, Reims, Saint-Lo, Gournay, and other places shall be five-sixths ell [*? deux tiers et demy,*] wide and twenty ells long.

10. The wide milled serges, white and gray, of Beauvais, Sedan, and Moüy shall have no selvages and shall be one ell wide and twenty ells long.

11. The other medium, all-wool serges, white and gray, of Moüy, Merlou, Méru, Sedan, Mézières, Donchéry, Tricot, Nantes, Boüilbec, Hautenépine, and other places where similar ones are made shall be two-thirds ell wide and twenty-one ells long, and those that are not all wool shall have a blue selvage and shall be the same length and width.

12. The serges of Amiens, Ascot style, white and all colors, shall be one ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

13. The serges, Chartres style, called "serges of the queen," shall be one-half ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

14. The *rases* [a smooth woolen], Châlons style, shall be five-eighths ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

15. The serges, Seigneur style, shall be three-fourths ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

16. The serges called serges of Ypres and Ascot, shall be one ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

17. The serges of Colles, heretofore called Aumale style, shall be five-eighths ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

18. All sorts of camlets, and even camlets of Lille and twisted-thread (*fil retors*) ones, shall be one-half ell wide and twenty-one ells long; and the wide ones shall be three-fourths ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

19. All *baracans* [a fabric of linen and wool], white, gray and mixed, shall have two widths, namely, one-half ell wide and twenty-one ells long, and three-fourths ell wide and twenty-three ells long.

20. *Estamines* [a thin fabric of wool and silk, called tamins in England]; serges called serges of Rome, twilled and smooth; *dauphines*, *indiennes*, *castagnettes*, *ferrandines*, *burails à contrepoil*, *marguerites*, *droguets* [these were all mixed fabrics of wool, plus linen, silk, cotton, or hair], white, gray, and all colors, shall be one-half ell wide and twenty-one ells long.

21. The *rases* [smooth woolens] of Reims, of Châlons, and of the surrounding places, white, gray, and marbled (*marbrées*), shall be five-eighths ell wide, and after having been fulled shall be twenty-one and one-quarter ells and up to thirty ells long. The cloth industry in the above-mentioned places shall be carried on according to their own statutes.

22. The *estamines* of Reims, of Châlons, and of surrounding places, Nogent-le-Rotrou, Authon, Montmiral, Basoches, Lude, and other places, shall be one-half ell wide and eleven to twelve ells long.

23. The *frocs* [a coarse woolen] made at Lisieux and Bernay, in Normandy, shall be one-half ell wide, after being fulled, and shall be twenty-four to twenty-five ells long.

24. The serges of Chartres, of Illiers, Nogent-le-Rotrou, Pontgoin, and

other near-by places where similar ones are made, fine and medium, shall be one-half ell wide, after being fulled, and twenty and a half ells long. And the cloth industry of Chartres shall be carried on according to its statutes.

25. The serges of Aumale, Grandvilliers, Feuquères, and of all surrounding places, both white and gray, shall be five-eighths ell wide and thirty-eight to forty ells long.

26. The serges of Crèvecœur, Blicourt, and all neighboring places, both white and gray, shall be, to wit, the wide ones five-eighths ell wide and twenty and a half ells long, after being fulled; and the narrow ones shall be half an ell wide and of the same length after being fulled.

27. All *droguets* [wool, or wool with silk or linen; in English, druggets], white, gray, mixed, plain, striped, and figured, which are made in the whole kingdom, all wool, and mixed with silk or linen, shall be seven-twelfths ell wide and thirty-five to forty ells long.

28. *Tiretaines* [linen and wool, like linsey-woolsey in England], white and gray, made of wool and linen, shall be three-fourths ell wide and thirty-five to forty ells long, all by the measure (*aulnage*) of Paris. And the warp of all the above-mentioned fabrics shall be of a number of threads sufficient for and suitable to their width, to make them of the fineness, goodness, and strength required for their type and quality.

29. The narrow serges of Ville-de-Roy shall be two-thirds ell wide and twenty-one ells long; and those that are not all wool shall have a blue selvage and the same length and width as the above-mentioned.

30. There shall henceforth be made no fabrics, however low may be their price, by a draper, a serge-maker, or by anyone at all, that are not [at least] one-half ell wide by the measurement of Paris.

31. All master drapers actually making cloth, and serge-makers, are enjoined to make the selvages of the cloths of the same length as the material, so that the cloths and serges may be easier to clip and so that they may not be badly joined: and to make these selvages strong enough so as not to tear when the cloths are put to dry.

32. All stuffs of wool and linen of the same name or of the same type and quality as those above-mentioned, and which could not be specified above, shall uniformly have the same length and width as the above-mentioned ones of the same type and quality, throughout the whole extent of the kingdom. And these cloths and serges and other fabrics shall be of the same uniform strength and quality for the whole length and width of the piece, without any difference. And the weavers and workers shall not make the warp of these fabrics except of the widths before-mentioned, nor employ wool nor linen thread nor other material of a finer quality at one end of the piece than in all the rest of its length and width; all this under penalty of confiscation and twenty *livres* fine for each contravention.

33. To enforce effectively the lengths and widths of these cloths, serges,

and other goods of wool and linen herebeforementioned, four months after the publication of these regulations, all the treadles (*lames*) and combs (*rôts*) of the looms for these fabrics shall be changed and made over to the width and size above prescribed for these fabrics; and where any looms are found, after the lapse of that interval, which are not of the above-mentioned widths, they shall be taken apart immediately to be made over to the above width and size, and those to whom they belong shall be condemned to a fine of three *livres* for each loom.

34. The associations and guilds of the crafts of draper and serge-maker of all the cities and towns of the kingdom shall be composed indiscriminately of all masters who have been received in those crafts, or who practice them by virtue of letters patent granted by His Majesty and by the kings, his predecessors, in consequence whereof they shall peacefully continue the practice of these crafts without being disturbed, provided that they cause to be inscribed their names and status of masters, both on the registers of the administrative judges who have jurisdiction over the regulation of manufactures, and on those of their guild, within one month after the publication of the present statutes and regulations; failing which, this time having passed, they cannot practice their trades as masters without the permission of these civil judges; or without going through their apprenticeship in the manner which shall be mentioned hereafter. And all persons other than the masters of these crafts, without any exceptions, shall not occupy themselves with the making of cloths, serges, or other fabrics, under penalty of confiscation of the cloth and a fine of 150 *livres*.

35. To maintain the masters and guilds of these crafts in the proper unity of good feeling, and to enforce the present statutes and regulations, there shall be named each year by a plurality of votes on the same day on which elections have heretofore been held, and for places where none have been held on such a day as shall be chosen by the officers who have a right to do so, the number of Wardens or Sworn Guardians of these crafts of draper and serge-maker that is proper for the places where the elections are held; and these wardens will swear before the above-mentioned officers to do well and duly the duties of their office during its term, which shall be not less than one year. And when these wardens go out of office, a new election for other wardens shall be held, but in such a way that there shall always be two old ones, or one at least, to instruct the new ones; and so on successively from year to year, the same order shall always be observed. And the aforesaid wardens and sworn guardians shall be obliged to do the duties of their office, well and duly, and to report faithfully to the administrative judge of manufactures all contraventions of the present statutes and regulations which may be committed, under penalty of losing their office and their position as masters. The masters, journeymen, and apprentices of the aforesaid crafts shall not assemble for the election of the aforesaid wardens nor for any other purpose whatsoever unless they have permission from the

officers who have the right to give it, under penalty of a thirty *livres* fine for each of the offenders, and of having their case brought up and carried through under the special procedure used for those involved in seditions. And when the aforesaid wardens and sworn guardians leave office, they shall turn over to their successors all registers and papers concerning the affairs of the aforesaid guild.

36. The measurers (*aulneurs*) shall not measure any goods unless they are marked with the mark of the place [of manufacture], and unless on them is the name of the weaver at the top and first end of the piece, worked on the loom and not with a needle, under penalty of fifty *livres* fine the first time, and the second a similar fine and loss of office; should this occur, they shall be replaced by the officers having administration of manufactures.

37. The measurers shall not be brokers (*courtiers*), nor shall the brokers be measurers, agents (*commissionnaires*), or factors (*facteurs*), nor shall they buy or cause to be bought any wool or other materials involved in cloth-making or serge-making, for their own account, or for anyone else, to resell them for profit directly or indirectly, under penalty of confiscation of the aforesaid goods and of one hundred *livres* fine, and of loss of their positions.

38. So as to be able easily to know and to distinguish the cloths, serges, and other stuffs which shall have been made before this present regulation from those which shall be made after its publication and in conformity with it, one month after the publication of these presents the officers administering manufactures, assisted by the masters and wardens or sworn guardians then in office, shall make without charge a general inspection in all the houses, stores, shops, and workrooms of the merchants, artisans, and workmen, even in those of the aforesaid wardens and sworn guardians then in office; and there they shall mark, with a mark made expressly for that purpose, all the cloths, serges, and other fabrics which they shall find there; after which the imprint of the aforesaid mark shall be put upon the registers of the guilds of drapers and serge-makers, and it shall then be broken in pieces in the presence of all those who shall have made the aforesaid inspections, and mention shall be made of this in the aforesaid registers. And the aforesaid mark shall be different from those with which the fabrics made in conformity with the present statute shall be marked, and around it shall be graven the name of the city, town, or village where the aforesaid stuffs shall have been made, and the name or mark of another place shall not be put on them, under penalty of confiscation of the aforesaid stuffs. And these stuffs made before the present regulation and in conformity with it, marked as has been said, may be sold and vended by the weavers and makers who have them, during the space of six months after the publication of these presents. But once that time has elapsed, they shall not be allowed to sell any more of that quality, under penalty of confiscation, of having the selvages publicly torn, and of a hundred *livres* fine against the buyer for each offense.

39. All cloths, serges, and other fabrics shall be seen and inspected, when they come back from the fuller, by the wardens and sworn guardians then in office, and marked by them with the mark of the place where they were made, if they conform to the present regulation. And if they find any defects, they will have them seized and will make their report of the matter to the judge administering manufactures, so that he may order the confiscation of them in the manner that they shall think best. And if they are not of the width ordered by these presents, their selvages shall be torn publicly. And to facilitate the aforesaid inspection and marking of the aforesaid goods, there shall be in all the cities, towns, and villages of the kingdom where the aforesaid manufactures are established, a room of the necessary size in the town hall or at the office of the guilds of the aforesaid crafts if it is possible, or at some other very convenient place; to which room the weavers and workmen shall be obliged to bring their goods, there to be inspected and marked, as has been said, on the days and at the hours which shall be set and determined by the judges administering manufactures, and for this purpose the aforesaid wardens and sworn guardians shall be obliged to present themselves there. And if the aforesaid goods are taken to other cities to be sold there, and also all such goods from foreign lands without any exceptions, they shall be taken directly to be unloaded in the markets or other places designated for the inspection of goods and not elsewhere, except those which are taken to fairs, so that they may also be seen and inspected there by the masters and wardens of the cloth industry of the aforesaid cities and marked by them if they are of the requisite quality. And in the cases where they are not of the requisite quality, or for those manufactured in France where the mark of the place where they were made has not been put upon them, or where the name of the weaver, done on the loom and not by needle, has not been placed upon the top and first end of the pieces of the aforesaid goods, they shall be seized; and on the report and by the proceedings of the aforesaid masters and wardens and sworn guardians, the confiscation of them shall be sought before the judges administering manufactures. And no merchants and weavers shall expose for sale, sell, or buy the aforesaid goods, unless previously they have been marked as has been said; nor shall the wardens and sworn guardians of the places where the aforesaid goods were made, mark them with any mark other than that of the aforesaid places, all under penalty of confiscation of the aforesaid goods and of greater penalties for further offenses.

40. The aforesaid cloths, serges, and other fabrics of wool and linen which shall be taken to fairs, shall be looked over, inspected, and marked there by the warden-masters and sworn guardians of the cloth industry of the place where the aforesaid fairs are held. And they shall be dealt with as set forth in the preceding article, and with the penalties there mentioned attached.

41. The wool destined to be used in the aforesaid manufactures shall be

looked over and inspected by the wardens and sworn guardians then in office, and, before that, shall not be exposed for sale. Those to whom it belongs shall not wet it nor put it in a damp place, nor mix together wool of different qualities, since some fulling less than the rest, such mixture makes the cloth unsubstantial and imperfect in texture. Instead, the wool of each quality shall be placed in separate bales, all this under penalty of 100 *livres* fine for each offense.

42. The wardens and sworn guardians of the cloth and serge industry in office, shall keep the markets and other places destined for the inspection of goods well closed and shut up for the safety of the aforesaid goods which shall be unloaded there, under penalty of being responsible, as private individuals, for any losses of these goods which may occur. And there shall be kept by the wardens and sworn guardians, or by someone whom they select, a good and faithful register of all the goods which shall be unloaded there, with the names of the merchants to whom they belong, with the date on which they are unloaded, and with that on which they are given back to the merchants, and the payment is to be but one *sou* per piece [of cloth] to cover the above-mentioned expenses, and the aforesaid fee is not to be increased for any reason whatsoever.

43. Merchants and artisans shall be obliged to allow the inspections of wardens and sworn guardians, and if they refuse to permit them, the aforesaid sworn guardians may call in an officer of justice to help them and to give them authority against the offenders.

44. And because disputes often arise between merchants, cloth-makers, and measurers, because the measurement of wide cloth and serges is with thumb and extra [*poulce et évant*—the idea is like a baker's dozen] at the end of the ell, and because twenty-one ells and a quarter are given as twenty, sometimes more, sometimes less, as the practice differs in various places, although the method of measurement should be uniform throughout the kingdom; in the future all goods shall be measured wood to wood [*bois à bois*—this seems to mean with one measuring stick touching another], justly and without anything extra. And the measurers shall not do otherwise, under penalty of a fine of 100 *livres* for each offense. And for the cloth industries, where it is the custom for the maker to give the merchant who buys the cloth an extra length for good measure, the aforesaid excess may be given, but for this case only, and it is not to be greater than one ell and a quarter on twenty-one ells and a quarter, popularly called "twenty-one and a quarter for twenty"; and with half pieces in proportion; and the merchants are not to take or receive more, nor to extend the practice of excess measurement to other goods for which, up till now, it has not been given; all under penalty of a 100 *livres* fine for each offense.

45. The merchant drapers of the cities and towns of the kingdom who shall buy goods from manufacturing drapers and serge-makers, either in the markets or at the fairs or elsewhere, shall complete and settle their

accounts within two or three days after the sale and delivery of the aforesaid goods, at the latest, so that the delay they cause in the matter may not injure the aforesaid drapers and serge-makers, under penalty, in case of delay, of forty *sous* for each day that the aforesaid drapers and serge-makers are forced to wait, from the day of the protest made by them to the day of the settlement of the account.

46. And the masters, journeymen, and apprentices of the craft of draper and serge-maker in the cities and towns of this kingdom shall be held to follow and conform to the special statutes which have been granted to them and confirmed in the Council of Commerce. And as for the other cities and towns where no special statutes have been granted, the system prescribed by the following articles for masters, journeymen, and apprentices, drapers, and serge-makers shall be punctually observed.

47. No one shall be received as a master who has not served apprenticeship with a master of the aforesaid craft and remained in the service of his master: to wit, for the drapers during the space of two complete and consecutive years, and for the serge-makers during the space of three years, also complete and consecutive, as to which a certificate shall be sworn to before a notary, which certificate shall be registered on the book of the guild. No master shall be allowed to take more than two apprentices, nor shall the aforesaid apprentices absent themselves from the house of their master during the time of their apprenticeship without a cause which is legitimate and which is held to be such by the administrative judge. And in case of contravention, their masters may have them arrested, in virtue of the present regulations, to make them finish their time; or else the masters may summon them to do so and, after having waited for a month, may have their names erased from the register of the guild, and may take others to replace them; and after that the aforesaid apprentices who have gone away shall not be able to count the time which has elapsed during their absence and first apprenticeship, but the aforesaid apprentices may bind themselves again to a new master for the same time as above. The master shall not dismiss his apprentice without a cause which is legitimate and is held to be such by the administrative judge, nor shall he take another, if one absents himself, until the above-mentioned month has expired, under penalty of a fine of thirty *livres*. And if it chances that any master should absent himself from the city in which he has dwelt, and should cease his work, another master shall be provided for the aforesaid apprentice after a month. Nor shall the masters of the aforesaid craft entice or attract to themselves the apprentice or journeyman of another master, nor give him employment directly or indirectly, under penalty of a fine of sixty *livres*.

48. His apprenticeship completed, the candidate who wishes to become a master shall make his masterpiece, and if judged capable, shall be received as a master, and his letters of reception shall be delivered to him upon the payment of six *livres* for all fees, and without his giving any banquet. And

no wardens of the aforesaid craft and no other persons shall receive a gift or present before, during, or after the making of the masterpiece, nor shall the aforesaid candidate give them any, under penalty of suspension from the status of master for a year, and 100 *livres* fine for each offender. For which a writ of execution shall be delivered by the administrative judge, after the summary hearing which he shall be obligated to hold after complaint about the matter or information as to it has been laid before him; and if any dispute shall arise as to the acceptance of the aforesaid masterpiece, it shall be seen and inspected by the administrative judge or another named or appointed by him for this purpose.

49. The sons of masters shall be received as masters before the administrative judge in the usual manner, if they have demonstrated their ability in the presence of the wardens and are at least sixteen years old.

50. The widows of masters of the aforesaid craft shall be allowed to have workrooms and to have work done in their homes in just the same way as their defunct husbands were allowed to, but they shall not be allowed to associate anyone with them unless it be a master of the aforesaid guild, nor to take any apprentices, except that they shall be allowed to carry through in their homes the apprenticeships begun and arranged for under their husbands. And in case the aforesaid widows abandon the aforesaid craft, they shall be required to turn over to the wardens then in office the certificates of the apprentices so that the latter may be provided with other masters, and complete the time of service specified by the aforesaid certificates. And if the widow or daughter of a master marry a journeyman, he shall be freed from the time he would have to serve the master according to the present statutes and regulations, but none the less he shall do his masterpiece for his reception, and he shall pay no other fees than those paid by the sons of masters.

51. The name of the master workers and weavers shall be put on the top and first end of each piece of the aforementioned goods, and it shall be worked on the loom and not by needle, under penalty of twelve *livres* fine for each piece on which the name shall not have been placed.

52. The master drapers, serge-makers, workmen, fullers, and others shall not draw out, lengthen nor stretch on tenters any piece of goods, either white or dyed, in such a way that it might shrink [later] in length or width, under penalty of a fine of 100 *livres* and confiscation of the goods for the first time, and, in case of a second offense, deprivation of their status as masters.

53. The greases called *flambart* [the grease that rises to the top of the water when pork is boiled] shall not be used for the oiling (*ensimage*) of cloth and serges, but only the whitest hog's lard [the use of grease other than lard was held to interfere with proper dyeing]. And the shearers (*tondeurs*) shall not make use of cards (*cardes*) to lay (*coucher*) the aforesaid cloth and serges, nor shall they keep any of them in their houses;



but they shall make use of teasels (*chardons*), under penalty of a fine of twelve *livres* for each offense.

54. The masters of the aforesaid craft guilds of drapers and serge-makers who work at cloth-making in the aforesaid manufactures for other masters, because of their indigence, shall not be allowed to sell, pawn, or keep the goods, nor the materials and tools to be used for their production, which have been entrusted and given to them for manufacture, under penalty of exemplary punishment; the aforesaid masters working thus in the making of cloth shall be subject to the same laws as the journeymen of the aforesaid crafts.

55. The seizure, distraint, and forced sale by legal procedure of mills, looms, tools, and utensils used for any manufacture whatsoever shall not be allowed for any debt, cause, or occasion whatsoever, save for the rent of the houses occupied by the aforesaid weavers and masters, but not for the sums due for the *tailles* nor the *gabelles* [salt tax]. And no officers and sergeants shall make such seizures or sales, under penalty of deprivation of office, a fine of 150 *livres*, and all costs, damages, and interest due to the parties against whom the seizure is made.

56. And the present regulation shall be transcribed into the book of the guild so that reference may be made to it when there is need, and a copy of it shall be delivered free of charge, one time only, to each master of the guild one month after the publication of these presents, for which the aforesaid masters shall sign a receipt in the aforesaid register.

57. The aforesaid wardens, actually in office, shall assemble in the room of their guild the first Monday of each month at two o'clock in the afternoon, and more often if need be, to confer on the affairs of the aforesaid guild, to hear the complaints and information as to infractions, which shall be made to them by the masters and apprentices on matters concerning their craft, to be settled in a friendly manner. And in case important matters should arise, having to do with aforesaid guild, which might give rise to a lawsuit, the wardens and sworn guardians actually in office shall collect in their room the greatest possible number of masters of the aforesaid guild, at least five or six, together with those who have been in office during the two preceding years, before whom they shall lay the matters in question, so that they may be settled by a majority vote. And what shall be thus decided on shall be transcribed into the above-mentioned register of the guild and carried out by all the masters of the aforesaid guild, as if all of them had been present at the meeting.

58. The money from all the fines which shall be levied as a result of these presents, and for infractions of them, shall be paid: to wit, one-half to His Majesty, one-quarter to the wardens actually in office, and the other quarter to the poor of the place where the judgment providing for payment of the aforesaid fines shall have been rendered.

59. And so that it may be known whether the wardens and sworn guard-

ians are fulfilling the duties of their office well and have carefully executed these present regulations, and also so that ways to perfect the aforesaid manufactures and to increase the trade in them may be sought the more, in all the cities and towns of the kingdom where there are or shall be hereafter guilds of master drapers and serge-makers, the officials administering manufactures shall cause to assemble before themselves, in the month of January of each year, the wardens of the crafts of the aforesaid manufactures of wool and linen who are in office, together with those who went out of office in the preceding year, and four other persons from each of the aforementioned guilds, such as they see fit to choose, together with two prominent bourgeois, so that the wardens and sworn guardians who are in office may inform the gathering of the existing conditions in the aforesaid manufactures, of their progress, of the steps which they think necessary to perfect them, of the observance or nonobservance which they have noted to be accorded to the present regulation, and of the ways by which it would be proper to improve the observance of it; so that, in regard to all this, the afore-mentioned gathering may give its advice as to what it shall think most useful and reasonable for the welfare of the public and of the trade in goods, of which a report shall be drawn up by the aforesaid officers administering manufactures, who shall be required to send a copy of it, within a month, to the superintendent of arts and manufactures of France; all this to be done free and without charge.<sup>31</sup>

Before the general regulation on woolens was issued, it was sent to La Reynie, *lieutenant-général de la police* of Paris, and de Riants, *procureur* of the Châtelet. After they had heard evidence as to the regulations, given by the masters and wardens of the merchant-drapers of Paris, these officials reported that it was their opinion that "the aforementioned articles are useful to the public and very necessary for the re-establishment and perfecting of the manufactures of fabrics of wool and linen which are made in France, both in regard to their use and consumption within the kingdom, and to increase their sale in foreign lands." In the enacting edict, which gave the regulations the force of law and which was signed by Louis XIV and Colbert, the purpose of the new legislation was described as an effort to remedy abuses in the length, width, strength, and quality of fabrics of wool and linen, and "to render uniform all those of the same type, name, and quality in whatever place they may be made, both to increase their sale inside and outside our kingdom, and to prevent the public from being cheated."<sup>32</sup>

A number of features in the regulations are noteworthy: the allow-

<sup>31</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 283 ff.

<sup>32</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 300-2.

ance for local variations, the insistence that the special regulations were to be enforced, the solicitude for the merchants and masters, the careful prescriptions for the measurement, inspection, and marking of goods, the provision that foreign cloth was to be subjected to the same standards, the effort to make admission to the status of master cheap and easy, the emphasis on the necessity of organizing the cloth industry into guilds, the important powers given the wardens and administrative judges (*juges de la police*), and so forth.

But most noteworthy of all is the fundamental simplicity of the regulations. It has become traditional to speak of the meticulous rigidity with which Colbert sought to regiment industry, though this criticism stems rather from the partisan writings of eighteenth and nineteenth-century advocates of *laissez faire* than from the researches of modern scholarship. Such a point of view might be reinforced by certain of the overcomplex regulations of the eighteenth-century protagonists of governmental Colbertism in France. It might even be documented, to some slight degree, from the special regulations of Colbert's time, even though it is clear that the special regulations were usually nothing more than an amplification and codification of existing practices and of guild statutes already in force. But in the case of the general regulations on woolens—the most important regulation issued under Colbert—there is little evidence of too great rigidity, too much emphasis on minutiae, or too constricting a body of industrial legislation.

The general regulations, it is true, did try to set up a system of governmental supervision of industrial production. They did endeavor to secure uniformity throughout France. They did set a premium on the maintenance of certain standards of quality. But on the whole they were less specific, less meticulous, and less severe, than the older guild regulations. They represented an attempt on the part of Colbert to generalize in broad terms what seemed to him the most desirable features of the existing local regulatory systems, and to put behind such regulations the authority of the government. They were merely a framework, within which wide room for discretion was left to the guilds, the wardens, and the local authorities. It was only upon the matter of the length and the width of textiles that the general regulations were particularly specific, for Colbert seems to have felt that dimensions were too important for the protection of the consumer, the good of trade, and the increase of sales abroad to be left to local control.

It is not entirely clear how far the general regulations superseded the special regulations issued under Colbert. It seems that the special regulations were regarded as still in force, and articles 21, 24, and 46 of the general regulations specifically so declared. But it also seems that in case of conflicting provisions, the general regulations were to be followed, rather than the special ones. A decree of the Council of State issued on February 14, 1688, applied this principle to the cloth manufacture in Reims, and though this was some years after Colbert's death, it seems safe to assume, from the nature of the two types of regulation, that this was the general rule.<sup>33</sup>

*Modifications of the woollens regulation.*—Both during and after Colbert's life, the general regulation on woollens was regarded not as something sacrosanct, to be adhered to blindly, but as a general statement of policy, to be modified when any really important interest demanded. Such modifications were made repeatedly and for a variety of reasons. A few examples will serve to illustrate the process. On February 19, 1671, a decree was issued modifying the dimensions of various cloths, at the request of certain guilds and merchants, who complained that since these fabrics were made in smaller sizes abroad, they could be sold more cheaply in foreign countries and "the trade in those of France diminishes and may well disappear." Accordingly, on the advice of Colbert, the required dimensions on a number of fabrics were drastically reduced. London-style serges, for instance, were to be  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ell wide and from 18 to 19 ells long, instead of  $\frac{5}{6}$  ells wide and 20 ells long. *Tiretaines* were to be  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an ell wide, instead of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ell. Wide camlets were to be  $\frac{2}{3}$  of an ell wide, instead of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ell.<sup>34</sup>

A decree of October 14, 1673, modified the general regulations so as to permit the manufacture of caddis, in the areas of Gévaudan, Velay, and the Cévennes, of a narrower width, and to permit its being dyed with Brazil wood instead of madder. The Estates of Languedoc had reported that while the regulations had done a great deal of good, they had reduced the sale of caddis abroad, since the manufacturers had had to raise the price to cover the cost of the extra width and the proper dyeing.<sup>35</sup>

A somewhat different case was that of the sieur Marissal, who was

<sup>33</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 513.

<sup>34</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 304-6; cf. Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 434-35.

<sup>35</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, III, 277-78.

making camlets at Amiens under a royal privilege. On the pretext that he was violating the general regulation by making his fabrics  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an ell instead of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ell wide, the wardens and masters of the merchant-merciers of the town began harassing him and trying to have his cloth confiscated. Marissal appealed to the king, and a decree was issued on March 11, 1673, declaring that "His Majesty, in granting to the aforesaid Marissal the privilege for his manufacture did not intend to subject him" to the general regulations. All the king wished was that Marissal should make his camlets like those of Brussels and Holland, and since it was reported that those fabrics were  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an ell wide, that was the proper width for Marissal's product.<sup>36</sup>

On May 13, 1673, another decree permitted the manufacturers of Auvergne to disregard article 30 of the general regulations, which provided that all fabrics must be at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an ell wide, and to make their tamins as narrow as  $\frac{1}{3}$  of an ell and an inch. The manufacturers had pointed out that they made these tamins especially for sale in Germany, where they were used to strain flour and milk, and in La Rochelle and Rochefort, where they were used to make pennants for ships. If made  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an ell or more wide, they were not suitable for these purposes. In view of these facts, Colbert had reported favorably on the request for modification.<sup>37</sup>

For similar reasons, Colbert approved a decree of July 15, 1673, which permitted the inhabitants of Albi to make baizes and *cordelats* less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an ell wide. From time immemorial these fabrics, it was declared, had been made in narrower widths, the usual one being  $\frac{7}{16}$  of an ell. To increase the width would force the use of more than one person on a loom, increase the price, and reduce the foreign sales. Furthermore, these fabrics were of "the lowest price," and the inhabitants of Albi solemnly promised to abide by the regulations for all other textiles, if allowed to make these narrow ones.<sup>38</sup>

A modification made by a decree of September 25, 1677, was of somewhat wider scope. It was brought to the attention of Colbert that in the generality of Montauban, the Pays de Foix, Nebousan, and the four valleys of Aure were made coarse woolens called *razes*, *cordelats*, *burats*, tamins, and caddis for sale in Spain, Portugal, and the West Indies, at low prices. Their cheapness made "them sell in preference to

<sup>36</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 145-46.

<sup>37</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 150-51; AD XI, No. 43, *liasse* 1, decree of May 13, 1673.

<sup>38</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 152-54; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,786, fol. 215.

those that came from England and Holland, although the latter are much better." It was the manufacture of these cloths that give a livelihood to the people of the area and consumed the coarse wool produced there, which was not fit for fine fabrics. Despite these facts, and despite royal enactments permitting the manufacturers of the area to ignore certain provisions of the regulations, the sieur le Poupet, inspector of manufactures, was trying to enforce the whole of the general regulation. On the basis of Colbert's report, the decree provided that articles 20, 21, 30, and 36 of the general regulation should not be applied to the districts in question.<sup>39</sup>

Though the general regulation was frequently modified to meet specific situations, it was in general preserved more or less intact for most places and for most fabrics. That it was well received all over France can scarcely be contended, for the merchants and the guilds were not prone to welcome any alterations of their traditional routines, nor any limitations on their freedom of activity. Objections of some sort were made at Saint-Lo, Carcassonne, Sedan, Bourges, Châteauroux, and a number of other places. But in general the issuance of the woollen regulation seems to have caused comparatively little trouble. It was rather the long, slow process of bringing about its enforcement that met with opposition, both open and covert, though even this was not of serious proportions. In some cases the general regulation was received with marked approval. The merchant drapers of Paris, who were consulted in its formulation, and who as wholesalers and retailers of cloth found it to their advantage to have fabrics of standard size and quality, seem to have welcomed it.<sup>40</sup>

*Silk regulations.*—For silks and the luxury fabrics, cloth of gold, and cloth of silver, there was no general regulation as there was for woollens. But the problem was somewhat different, since the production of the costly textiles was concentrated in three cities, Paris, Tours and Lyon, instead of being scattered through scores of towns as was the woollen industry. It was therefore possible to regulate the major part of the silk manufacture by issuing a special regulation for Paris, one for Tours, and one for Lyon. These regulations, all similar in tone and content, were prepared under Colbert's guidance and promulgated in 1667. They covered the field almost as thoroughly as a general regulation would have done. By 1682 the production of silks at Nîmes had grown to im-

<sup>39</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, III, 39-40.

<sup>40</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 213; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 208-9.

portant proportions. In that year, accordingly, a special regulation for that town was prepared and issued.

The first of the special regulations for silks, in point of time, was that for Tours. A letter from Voisin de la Noiraye, intendant at Tours, to Colbert, dated December 5, 1666, indicates that the regulations for that city had already been drawn up and submitted for suggestions and criticisms to a meeting of those involved in the industry. The project for the regulations was approved by the wardens and other important persons in the industry and returned to Paris, where it was put in final form and promulgated on March 3, 1667. It contained sixty-four articles. The second special regulation for silks was that for Lyon. It was based in part on the old statutes and regulations for that city, and was formulated under Colbert's influence, through the coöperation of certain master manufacturers, the *échevins* and the *prévôt des marchands* of Lyon. It was issued under royal sanction on May 13, 1667, and contained sixty-seven articles. The regulation for Paris, with sixty-four articles, was drawn up in similar fashion and issued on July 9, 1667.<sup>41</sup>

These special silk regulations went into much more detail on technical processes than the woolen regulations, special or general, and than the earlier silk statutes. But they were but faint foreshadowings of the elaborate eighteenth-century silk regulations. The old silk statutes of Lyon of 1551 had devoted three articles to technical matters. Those of 1667 had fourteen dealing with technical considerations. Those of 1737 had fifty-one. The regulations of 1667 did not fix the methods for unwinding silk from the cocoons, or preparing the silk fibers, but did set up standards for the twisting of silk thread from the fibers. It limited strictly the fabrics in which raw silk could be mingled with that which had been "cooked," and fixed the proportions for those cases where it was permissible. Different types of silk fabrics were to have distinctive selvages, for the protection of the public. In cloth of gold and cloth of silver, only pure thread, made of the precious metals, was to be used, save for certain fabrics which were to have distinctive selvages and in which thread of imitation gold or silver might be employed.

The three regulations, which were very similar, also fixed the dimensions of the various types of silks and cloths of gold and silver, the

<sup>41</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 689-90; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,739, fols. 80-136, 53-79; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 218-19; *Rec. des règ.*, II, 99-126, 36-71, 9-32.

types of thread to be used in each, and the number of threads in the warp. Provisions much like those of the general woolens regulation were made for the organization of the industry and for the inspection and marking of the textiles. Each piece of goods was to bear the maker's mark, and was to be inspected and marked by the wardens, who were authorized to charge a fee for this service. The penalties for selling unmarked cloth were severe, ranging up to confiscation and a fine of 600 *livres* for the second offense. Some provisions harked back to the older guild statutes. For example, the regulation for Paris contained articles forbidding work or transactions on Sundays and holy days; insisting that all merchants and masters must attend a special mass at nine in the morning, at the Church of the Blancs-Manteaux on the day of St. Louis; and arranging that when a master died his body was to be accompanied to its burial place by six masters or wardens of the guild.

On the whole, like the general regulations for woolens, the special regulations for silks were aimed to secure an orderly and carefully organized industry along guild lines, a high standard of quality which would win and hold foreign markets and protect the domestic consumer, a certain uniformity of product, and a regulatory system under local auspices but backed by the authority of the national government.<sup>42</sup>

At Paris and at Tours the regulations were received with little open opposition. But in Lyon the manufacturers and weavers, particularly those of a smaller sort who had not been consulted in the formulation of the regulation as had the merchants, were violently opposed to the new dispensation. Under the leadership of one hardy soul, they actually staged disorders which lasted for several days. Colbert had, after an unaccountable delay, sent the new regulation to Lyon on July 15, 1667. He directed the *prévôt des marchands* to post, print, and see to the punctual distribution of it. "For which," he added, "I foresee that you will have the less difficulty in that the same regulations are being followed today in the cities of Paris and Tours." The *présidial* of Lyon did not register the regulation until August 5, 1667, and it was not registered and published by the municipal authorities until September 13, 1667, a full four months after its approval by the king. Despite the disapproval of certain elements, the regulation was enforced at Lyon, and by March

<sup>42</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 213-14; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 53-136; *Rec. des règ.*, II, 9-71, 99-126.



29, 1669, the *échevins* could report to Colbert that they were securing its rigorous observance and that it had brought such "order and discipline" to the industry that the manufacture of silks was increasing daily.<sup>43</sup>

At Tours, though there was little disturbance and opposition, the merchant manufacturers asked Voisin de la Noiraye for a year's grace, in which to finish the pieces of cloth which had been started, before the new dimensions should be enforced. If the enforcement were to be immediate, they claimed that they would have to dismiss many workers and that this would be sure to cause disorders and riots. The intendant, by an ordinance of December 30, 1667, gave them until February 15, 1668, to change their looms and to start making textiles of the requisite size. Some of the difficulties that were attributed to the new regulation at Tours are brought out by a decree of November 10, 1685, two years after Colbert's death. It set forth various complaints of the manufacturers of that city. They claimed that the regulation, in forcing them to increase the width of their textiles from  $1\frac{1}{2}_4$  of an ell to  $2\frac{3}{4}_8$  of an ell, had caused them to lose their foreign markets to the Italians, English, Dutch, and other foreigners, who had continued making the old width. They insisted that the provisions as to the number of threads were unenforceable, because of the variations in the threads. They declared that the regulation, by providing that textiles which were not made entirely of silk might have only one selvage, had so impaired the quality of these goods as to ruin their sale, especially since all other towns, French and foreign, made such textiles with two selvages. They maintained that through the enforcement of the regulations the number of looms in operation at Tours had been decreased from 7,000 in 1666-67 to 1,000 in 1685. They said that they had requested changes in the regulation long ago, and that modifications would have been granted, had it not been for the death of Colbert. The decree granted some of their requests by providing that silks might be made either  $1\frac{1}{2}_4$  or  $2\frac{3}{4}_8$  of an ell wide, but of no other widths, and that fabrics made partly of silk might have two selvages. But the articles on the number of threads were to be enforced.<sup>44</sup>

The last of the important special regulations for silk issued in Col-

<sup>43</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 208-9; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 440; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 683; Godart, *L'Ouvrier en soie*, pp. 83, 275; Pariset, *Histoire de la fabrique lyonnaise*, pp. 88 ff.

<sup>44</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,739, fols. 76-77; *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 173-75.

bert's time was that for Nîmes. It contained sixty-eight articles, was very similar to the three earlier ones, being based directly on that of Lyon, and was issued under royal authority in September, 1682. It was drawn up at the requests of the merchants of Nîmes, who, like those elsewhere, favored regulations much more than the weavers and manufacturers, who were more directly affected.<sup>45</sup>

A silk regulation of limited scope but general application was that promulgated in February, 1672, for the manufacture of stockings and other articles on looms. It provided for the formation of a guild out of the best workers at Château de Madrid. But it also laid down rules for the preparation of the silk, the processes of manufacture, and for the weight of the finished stockings. Masters in the new guild were to be free to set up shop in any town in France. For twelve years each master was to be allowed to have two apprentices, but after that only one was to be permissible. The ordinary guild arrangements as to masters, journeymen, and apprentices were written into the regulation.<sup>46</sup>

*Linen regulations.*—Colbert's approach to the problem of regulating the linen industry was in a sense a combination of the methods used for woollens and for silks. Instead of making regulations for single cities, or general regulations for the whole country, he tended toward a policy of regional regulations. But in this, as in most other things, Colbert was acting on precedent. Royal letters patent of Henry III dated April 6, 1575, and confirmed under Henry IV and Louis XIII, had, for example, set up standards and regulations for the linens of the three dioceses of Cornouailles, Léon, and Tréguier.<sup>47</sup>

As early as January 18, 1664, was issued a decree of the Council of State regulating the linen manufacture and trade of Normandy. It spoke of the old regulations, which had sought to ensure fine quality in linens. It insisted that linens were very important, because of the great quantity of them sent abroad "to foreign lands and especially to Spain and to the Indies, and because of the large returns in gold and silver that come from them." The decree went on to relate the abuses in the industry. The inspection of the textiles was evaded. Merchants bought direct from the makers, rather than in the market of Rouen. The quality of the products had declined to a marked degree. Such defective linen

<sup>45</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, II, 127-54; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 214.

<sup>46</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, IV, 1-7.

<sup>47</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 3-7.

was being exported that much of it could not be sold, and this obliged the "Indians to get them elsewhere and especially those of Brabant."

The decree therefore ordered all the old regulations enforced. It forbade the mixture of various materials in a single fabric, so that the quality of each piece might be uniform. It fixed the length of *toiles brunes* at ten or twelve ells, and provided that if they were made longer than that the pieces were to be cut down. All linen made in Normandy was to be sold at the market in Rouen, and it was to be inspected and marked there.<sup>48</sup>

Ten years later Colbert de Terron wrote to his cousin, the minister, to complain of the quality of sailcloth being made in Brittany. Sails that used to last two years were now good for but one, he declared. Drastic steps must be taken to reestablish the industry, he insisted. It was perhaps this complaint that stimulated Colbert to look into the matter, though similar information seems to have come in during the ensuing months. At any rate, on June 27, 1676, the king ordered that the chief business men of Paris, Rouen, and Saint-Malo be chosen and gathered together at Paris, in Colbert's presence, to discuss how to restore the linen industry of Normandy and Brittany. The meeting was duly held, and out of its deliberations came two general regulations, one for the linens of Normandy, and the other for the linens of Brittany.

The regulation for Normandy consisted of ten articles. The first forbade the mixture of hemp with linen, or any other departure from uniformity of quality in high-grade linens called *blancardes*, *fleurets*, and *reformées*. The second article fixed the number of threads for the warp of these textiles, and for that of *toiles de coffre* and *toiles brunes* as well. The third, drawn from the decree of 1664, insisted that the pieces of *toile brune* were not to be more than ten or twelve ells long. The fourth ordered that looms be made over to conform with the second article. The fifth article, like the first, forbade the mixture of hemp with flax and provided that the thread used in any given piece must be uniform. The sixth article ordered that all linen must be inspected and marked in "oil and black" at each end of the piece, with a symbol indicating the place of manufacture. Defective fabrics were to be confiscated and cut up. The marking offices were to be set up at the *hôtels de ville* or some other convenient place. Textiles from out of town were to be taken directly to the markets and marked again there. No unmarked linens

<sup>48</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 7-10.

were to be sold. The seventh article forbade the bleaching of unmarked linens. The eighth applied specifically to Rouen. It ordered that linens brought to that city must be taken directly to the markets and inspected and marked, before being offered for sale there. None were to be unbaled, displayed, or offered for sale save at the markets. The ninth article forbade measurers or weavers to buy any linens on their own account. The tenth ordered the manufacturers to submit to the visits of inspectors.

The general regulation for the linens of Brittany, in nine articles, was very similar to that for Normandy, but even simpler. It provided specifically for the sizes, for the inspection, and for the marking of linens made at or near Morlaix, Quintin, Uxel, and Pontivy. Both these regulations differ notably from those connected with silks and woolens, in that there is little or no mention of any guild or guildlike system of industry. They dealt purely with problems of manufacture and sale, leaving untouched questions as to how the industry was to be organized. The reason of course was that most of the linen manufacturing was done under a regime of free work (*travail-libre*), which included the domestic system on both a large and a small scale, small independent master weavers, household production on a part-time basis in rural areas, and some fairly good-sized factories.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to the regulations of linen already mentioned, there were three of less scope and significance. One, issued in 1679, dealt with the linens, ticking, fustians, and dimities made in and around Caen, while two brief decrees (1669, 1683) regulated the linen manufacture of Laval. More important was the linen regulation for Beaujolais, confirmed by a decree of April 7, 1682. It was drawn up by the *échevins*, weavers, and merchants of Villefranche. Though it set up strict standards for length, width, and quality, one of its chief objects seems to have been to free the linen industry of the province from its dependence on the big merchants of Lyon. Its thirteenth article went even further than might have been expected, and granted to the wardens chosen by all the weavers and merchants of Beaujolais the right to inspect goods and to enforce the regulations for ten leagues round about the province. It was confirmed by royal authority only after long and careful investigation.

<sup>49</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 699-700; *Rec. des règ.*, III, 301-7, 398-400.

That Colbert sought expert advice in such matters is indicated by a letter he wrote the intendant d'Ormesson on December 23, 1682. It had been suggested to d'Ormesson, apparently, that he use his authority to change certain provisions of the regulations. Colbert warned the intendant to be very wary in making any modifications, so as to

cause no diminution in the goodness of these linens [of Beaujolais], because these statutes and regulations were turned over at Paris to merchants of the greatest knowledge and experience in these manufactures, who have given on a number of occasions very useful advice on this same subject, so that you should take great care that the changes you have been urged to make do not arise from the little private interests to which merchants are only too subject.<sup>50</sup>

In other fields of textile manufacture, regulation was usually secured by special prescriptions of one kind or another. Frequently it was obtained by writing regulatory clauses into the privilege which founded a new industry. Occasionally such special provisions would be extended in their scope to include other manufactures. For example, statutes and regulations for the tapestry industry of Aubusson were approved by letters patent of July, 1665, in connection with the reorganization of the manufacture there into a collective *manufacture royale*. About four years later, by a decree of February, 1669, these statutes and regulations were extended to apply to the tapestry industry of the town of Filletin.<sup>51</sup>

*The dyeing regulations.*—Closely connected with the regulation of the manufacture of textiles were the regulations for dyeing. These took the form of general legislation applying to the whole of France and were intended to supplement the regulations for silks, linens, and woolens. It seemed necessary to make sure that the dyeing enhanced rather than impaired the fine quality that was to result from the regulation of the manufacturing processes. Colbert felt that it was especially essential to have textiles well dyed, because the consumer was less able to judge whether a piece of cloth had been properly dyed with fast colors than he was to decide whether the cloth had been well made, and because nothing could so reduce the sale of French textiles abroad as bad dyeing techniques.

In point of time, the two important dyeing regulations were con-

<sup>50</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, III, 455-60; "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fol. 399; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 215.

<sup>51</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 365-66.

temporaneous with the general regulation on woolens, for they were issued under letters patent in August, 1669. For purposes of regulation, Colbert divided the dyers into two classes—master dyers *en grand et bon teint*, and master dyers *en petit teint*. The former were by far the more important to Colbert, since they were the ones who dyed the expensive woolens. They were permitted to dye all wool, woven or unwoven, and all woolens of whatever sort or price. They were the ones who dyed fabrics in blues, reds, and yellows, and shades derived from these. They also dyed the more expensive textiles in grays and root color, or fallow. The dyers *en petit teint* were restricted to dyeing cheap wools and woolens in grays or root color, and certain cheap textiles in some shades of rose and violet. For black and some other colors the dyers *en grand et bon teint* did the preliminary stages, the dyers *en petit teint* the final ones. In general, dyers *en grand et bon teint* dyed expensive textiles in expensive colors by elaborate processes, while dyers *en petit teint* dyed cheap fabrics in cheap colors by simple processes.

One of these regulations dealt exclusively with the dyeing of cloth, serges, and other woolens *en grand et bon teint*. But in a negative way it was very important for the dyers *en petit teint*, since it forbade them to do many things. It contained sixty-two articles. The other regulation had to do with dyeing in general and in ninety-eight articles dealt with the dyeing of silks, linens, woolens, and mixed fabrics. In preparing the regulations, Colbert called to his assistance the best dyers of Paris and of the provinces. In a sense, both the regulations were in part technical treatises, as well as restrictive measures, for they gave detailed information on the most satisfactory processes.<sup>52</sup>

The regulation for the dyeing of woolens *en grand et bon teint* provided that the dyers *en grand et bon teint* and the dyers *en petit teint* were to form separate guilds. The guilds of dyers in each town were to consist of those who had been received as masters in the regular way and of those who held royal letters of mastership. A series of special provisions sought to increase the number of dyers *en grand et bon teint*. At Paris, where there were only three such master dyers, the *prévôt de la police* was authorized to select three dyers who were to do a masterpiece and were to swear to abide by the regulation. They were then to be admitted as master dyers *en grand et bon teint* and permitted to dye all types of woolens. In the chief city of each province,

<sup>52</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 343-98; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 216 ff.

if there were not three dyers *en grand et bon teint*, the local administrative judge was to select dyers *en petit teint* and make them dyers *en grand et bon teint* in a similar fashion, until there were three. The new dyers *en grand et bon teint* thus created were to have all the rights and privileges of the existing ones.

Dyers *en petit teint* were forbidden to dye cloth (*draps*) or to dye any textiles blue. For their work they were permitted to use caldrons, but not vats. Each guild of dyers *en grand et bon teint* was to elect a warden to enforce the regulations. Fifteen days after his election he was to cause ~~to~~ be dyed, in the presence of administrative officials, twelve sample pieces of Berry cloth (*drap de Berry*) or other woolen of equal quality, in twelve different standard colors, including black, green, violet, rose, scarlet, and so forth, and also four pieces of *ratine* in four different colors. These samples were to be used as standards. One-half of each was to be given to the dyers' guild and one-half to the drapers' guild, to be referred to in case of disputes.

Dyers *en grand et bon teint* were forbidden to have in their houses or places of business more or other than eighteen enumerated dyestuffs. Both woad and indigo were included in the permissible materials. Dyers *en petit teint* were not permitted to have in their possession any of the eighteen materials allowed for the dyers *en grand et bon teint*. Dyers of both classes were forbidden to possess nine "false ingredients," which included India wood, Brazil wood, and fustic. Four other materials, such as iron filings and copper filings, were prohibited to all dyers, because they spoiled the quality of the cloth. Provisions were made for the marking and the sale of cloth dyed before the issuance of the regulations. A list was given of textiles which only dyers *en grand et bon teint* were to be permitted to dye. It included all fine cloths and serges, the better grades of *ratines* and *droguets*, and so forth. Dyers *en petit teint* were to dye only cheaper fabrics, such as *sergettes* and *frisons*, worth less than 2 *livres* undyed. But they were to be permitted to dye fabrics to be used for lining clothes, in such colors as gray, brown, and so forth.

In great detail the regulation stipulated the processes and materials to be used in dyeing different textiles various colors (articles 9-29). Special attention was paid to black, which Colbert considered the most important and the most difficult color. The regulation explained how proper blacks could be secured that would be "beautiful and lasting"

and would not come off on the wearer. To prove that the dyeing had been done properly, the dyer was ordered to leave a rosette on the cloth undyed and a further rosette to show each stage of the dyeing (article 34). Provision was made for tests to be conducted before the proper authorities, whenever it was alleged that a piece of cloth had been improperly dyed. A merchant draper was to be appointed to visit and inspect all the dyeing establishments, including that of the warden dyer. He was to compare the cloth dyed with the official samples and to mark with a lead seal all cloth which had been dyed in conformity with the regulations. On one side of the seal was to be impressed the name of the dyer. No merchant was to buy nor accept from a dyer any unmarked textiles. Improperly dyed pieces of cloth were to have their selvages destroyed. The warden dyer was also to visit the other dyers and see that the regulations were upheld. Foreign cloths were to be inspected by the wardens of the drapers, and marked if properly dyed. If improperly dyed, they were to be confiscated.

The regulations also contained provisions for apprentices, masters, widows, wardens, and so forth, very similar to those of the general regulations on woolens (articles 44–59). If cloth were seized for the debts of its owner after it had been dyed, the dyer was to be the preferred creditor. Fines levied for infractions of the regulations were to go, one-half to the king, one-fourth to the wardens, and one-fourth to the poor. Annual assemblies of the guilds of dyers *en grand et bon teint* were to be held to discuss ways and means of improving the art.<sup>53</sup>

The statutes and regulations for dyeing of silk, wool, and linen, issued at about the same time as the foregoing regulation, ordered each dyer to concentrate his attention on one of the three types of fabrics. They gave much technical instruction, especially on the dyeing of silks, advising, for instance, that the silk be placed in cold alum dip, since a hot alum dip tended to spoil the luster. It dealt at length with the dyeing of worsted, linen thread, silk thread, and so forth, for use in figured textiles, tapestries, and the like. It provided for the organization, regulation, and inspection of other dyers in much the same fashion as that laid down for the dyers *en grand et bon teint*.<sup>54</sup>

Not satisfied with the technical information imparted by the two dyeing regulations, Colbert caused to be prepared and published in March, 1671, what was entitled "General instruction for the dyeing

<sup>53</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 343–70.

<sup>54</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 370–95.



of wool and manufactures of wool in all colors and for the culture of the drugs and ingredients employed for that purpose." Some of the dyers had opposed the publication of information which they regarded as trade secrets. But Colbert had overridden all opposition and brought to bear on the formulation of the "Instruction" the best technical knowledge that he could find in France. The chemist Chaptal over a century later, called it "the best treatise on dyeing then in existence." The purpose of the "Instruction" was to improve the quality and secure greater uniformity in French dyeing by making known the best techniques, processes, and formulae, and by giving sound information on growing vegetable dyes and procuring others. To be sure, in the then state of chemistry the "Instruction" tended inevitably to give rule-of-thumb advice, but it was probably the best advice that an aspiring dyer could have obtained at the time. Because it was couched in the imperative mood and because of the auspices under which it was issued, the "Instruction" seems to have been thought of by both dyers and officials, and probably even by Colbert, as having almost the force of law. In essence, however, it was not regulatory but informative, not restrictive but helpful.<sup>55</sup>

The "Instruction" contained 317 articles and it has sometimes been held up, by persons who have not read it, as an example of the detailed and hampering regulation indulged in by Colbert. A fairly literal translation of the first seven articles may serve to give the flavor of the whole:<sup>56</sup>

1. In dyeing, five kinds of simple, unmixed, or primary colors are made, from which all the others are derived or made up.

2. These colors are blue, red, yellow, fallow (*fauve*), and black.

3. Fabrics that are to be dyed in red or yellow should preferably be boiled with alum or tartar and other ingredients which do not give a color, in the manner which will be related hereafter.

4. Those that are to be dyed black should be boiled with gall and sumach, and, lacking sumach, with myrtle-leaved sumach [*rhus myrtifolia*] or *fovic* [a native French plant]; being well galled, they have a color between fallow and gray; and it will be observed that fallow and root color are really the same thing.

5. But the fabrics that are dyed blue and fallow are dyed from the white to blue or fallow, without other preparation than that which they receive from the fuller.

<sup>55</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 147-98; *Rec. des règ.*, I, 421-519; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 217.

<sup>56</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 147-98; *Rec. des règ.*, I, 421-519.

6. The fabrics of the best wool and those which are whitest and clearest are those which take the most beautiful and best color.

7. Fabrics which have been bleached with sulphur or with white lead should be well scoured and purged of the poor quality of these two ingredients, which prevent the penetration of the dye, spoil its beauty, and hinder the proper union of the colors.

The "Instruction" then proceeded to give a great deal of information about dyestuffs and colors. It heartily approved the use of woad and declared that indigo should be used only when mixed with woad. It explained that India wood and Brazil wood, when used to deepen blue dyes, gave such poor colors as to justify the provision of the regulation which forbade dyers *en grand et bon teint* even to have them in the house. It took up each color by itself, stating, for example, "There are seven kinds of good reds, which give four different kinds of shades when used in making up other colors." In systematic fashion, it discussed each of the five simple colors and then described in detail the shades and tones that could be secured by mixing dyes. The vistas which the instruction must have opened up to a simple provincial dyer are indicated by some of the more exotic shades that were discussed: parrot green, apple blossom, peach bloom, sky blue, cabbage green, fire color, chestnut, bearskin, dead leaf, black bread, lead gray, onion skin, hell blue (*bleu d'enfer*), clay color, Breda gray, pansy color, dead rose, grass green, doe's belly, and so forth.

The instruction explains that when it says certain colors are not used, it does not mean that they cannot be made, but merely that they are not in common use or that a similar shade may be made better or more cheaply in another way. It added:

The experienced dyer will know how to make excellent use of the good dyes that are permitted him and how to profit from what is left of his dips for making up shades of colors in such ways as he judges proper; he should be left entirely free to make such use of them, just as he should be absolutely forbidden to make poor use of them for the alteration or falsification of colors.

The "Instruction" divided colors into two general categories: "good" and "false." The false ones were those which did not dye true, were not fast, or were for some other reason undesirable. Usually an explanation was given as to how a "good" color, approaching the "false" in shade, could be secured.

The "Instruction" explained carefully the distinction between dyers

*en grand et bon teint* and those *en petit teint*. It added that in towns which had only one dyer, he was supposed, if possible, to do both kinds of work and to observe all the regulations for both types of dyer. No one but a dyer was allowed to do any dyeing, save that hat-makers might dye their own wares and drapers might give certain simple preliminary baths to their cloth. The "Instruction" insisted that the art of dyeing was difficult and that the only way to learn it properly was by a long apprenticeship. It went on to set forth and to justify the various dyeing regulations. Most of the dyes that had been forbidden had been banned because they were injurious to the cloth; others, like Brazil wood, "because it is a false color and a foreign dye which takes much money out of France." Some few dyestuffs, which slightly impaired the quality of the cloth, were none the less permissible because they gave brilliant reds not obtainable in any other way.

Some dyers, declared the "Instruction," claimed to have a secret process for producing "beaver black." This was quite all right, if they used permitted materials; if not, "their intentions should be distrusted." To encourage improvement in the art of dyeing, it had been arranged to grant privileges to anyone who discovered a new process. But the secret must never be in the hands of one person only, lest he die or leave France. "If this secret is known to some Frenchman, he must always be preferred to foreigners, so that he may remain in the kingdom, together with the profit he makes from it."

Sometimes the "Instruction" waxed quite allegorical, as the following excerpt shows:

As the four primary and simple colors, which are blue, red, yellow, and fallow, can be compared to the four elements, the three first to the transparent and clear ones, and the last to the opacity of earth; so likewise can black be compared with night and death, since all other colors darken into and are buried in black: but as death puts an end to all the ills of life, so it is, necessarily, that black puts an end to all the defects in colors which arise from some failure of the dyer or of the dye, or from style which varies with time and with the caprice of men. Thus, it being neither reasonable nor useful for the public that a fabric, which fails to find a buyer because of its color, should remain a prey to the worm and the moth in a store, when it could be sold by having it dyed black, it is necessary in allowing that fabrics which are faulty in color or are no longer in style be dyed black or some other color darker than the first, to make provision that they shall be dyed in the best way possible for the quality and beauty of the color and the durability of the cloth.

On the dyeing of hats the "Instruction" was rather cautious. It explained that before making regulations on the subject, it would be necessary to consult with hatters in various localities, so as to find out what in each place would give to hats "the ultimate perfection, which if found in the hats made in France will restore them to esteem, and will give them a sale in foreign states where false dyeing and bad manufacture have made them lose their market." For this purpose a general regulation was necessary, to serve "as a law in the future for all the hat-makers of the kingdom, a thing which will be good for them, and will procure a great advantage to the public." But in the meanwhile, it seemed wise to give some information and make some suggestions that might improve the quality of French hats.

The last part of the "Instruction" was devoted to the subject of dyestuffs, a matter which was thus introduced:

It being impossible to get good colors without good drugs, and France being able to supply us with the best ones, if our work and our efforts second her fertility, it is necessary after having taught the making of good colors to tell the means which can contribute to the trade in the good drugs which France can produce, so that people will occupy themselves usefully in growing them and will get from them the profits and advantages of which the foreigners and our own blindness have deprived us, since the beginning of the century.

The "Instruction" then proceeded to discuss the raising of dye plants and the finding of dye minerals. It attributed the falling off in the use of domestic woad and the increase in the use of foreign indigo to abuses in the growing, preparation, and sale of the former. It announced that a regulation on woad-growing would be drawn up, and an inspector sent out to improve conditions and give advice. It was planned to form a guild of woad-growers in each parish where the plant was produced, and to make local inspectors or wardens responsible for conditions. It estimated that negligence had lost to upper Languedoc alone 40,000,000 *livres* that it might have secured from the sale of woad—a thing "which has come about only through carelessness or ignorance of the proper means to prevent it, since our kings, their Council, the courts, and the Estates of Languedoc have never failed to furnish them with decrees and ordinances to favor them and to prevent the use of indigo throughout France." It had been generally recognized that the sale of indigo by the Genoese, Spanish, English, and

Dutch had ruined the market for woad, "but no one has been willing to admit or recognize that faults and carelessness in growing it and in preparing it have contributed as much as the other things." The only remedy was to follow the instructions given in the present document. The interests of Languedoc and of the Company of the Indies had been adjusted by allowing the use of six pounds of indigo to each bale of woad, and by forbidding the entry of all indigo brought by foreigners.

Nor was it only woad that was an object lesson of neglect. A long, involved and eloquent passage discussed the plight of madder, in these terms:

One cannot behold the fertility of France or see so great a group of idlers remaining useless with their arms crossed (while they could be usefully employed in cultivating the land or in various other worth-while things with which nature has favored us), so that they live off the blood and substance of others, without blaming the negligent policies of the Frenchmen of an earlier day and their attachment to useless occupations, which usually filled them with wind and smoke and caused them to produce whirlwinds and tempests which often came close to crushing the state under the weight of civil wars.

This is so clearly to be seen in the case of madder roots, which the earth produces of itself in most of the provinces of the kingdom, despite the negligence and scorn of the French, that one cannot see this good and generous mother holding out these golden opportunities to arouse her children from idleness and excite them to toil, without being disgusted at the haughty blindness of the French, who use up their own money to buy from foreigners what they could gather in plenty at home.

Now that the policies of the French are more enlightened as to the establishment of the cultivation of madder, for the purchase of which the French use every year more than 500,000 *livres*, the proper methods have been included in this Instruction, so that the French may learn how and be able to cultivate it throughout France and in the part of Flanders that belongs to the king, and thus supply madder, with great profit, to Spain, Italy, and other near-by states which have none of it.

The succeeding articles described madder, told how to grow it, and discussed the plans that had been worked out to send inspectors into the provinces to instruct the people, encourage its cultivation, and find better ways for raising and preparing it. The "Instruction" went on to discuss other vegetable dyes and to plead for their greater use. It then turned to the subject of minerals, salts, and other materials used in dyeing. It deplored the amount of alum, copperas, and so forth, purchased from foreign lands and expressed the hope that French

sources of supply could be opened up and improved. Part technical treatise, part explanation of the regulation, part practical suggestions, part patriotic polemic, the "Instruction" on dyeing is one of the most curious and typical documents emanating from the government under Colbert.<sup>57</sup>

*Other regulations.*—Though the great majority of Colbert's regulations had to do directly or indirectly with the most important industry of France—the manufacture and preparation of textiles—still there was a good deal of regulatory activity in other fields. One of the most vexing problems of government control arose in connection with beaver hats. Before the middle of the seventeenth century France had become famous for the manufacture of these hats. But beaver fur, secured from distant Canada, was expensive, and by the 1650's it had become customary to make what were called "half-beaver hats" of a mixture of beaver fur with other cheaper sorts of hair. The feeling grew up gradually that not only did these half-beaver hats injure the market for Canadian beaver, but also they were a "false" product, even when sold frankly as half-beavers.

In 1664, therefore, the manufacture of such adulterated hats was forbidden under penalty of a fine of 200 *livres* and confiscation of the wares. When this proved insufficient to check the manufacture and sale of half-beavers, the loss of the status of master was added to the penalties (June, 1666). A decree of the Council of Commerce of July 21 forbade the use of any fur save that of the beaver, and raised the amount of the fine, but allowed three months' grace in which to dispose of illegal hats. It urged as the chief reason for such regulation the fact that the sale of adulterated hats was ruining the export trade. Further decrees of November 8, 1667, and June 2, 1670, reënforced the prohibition.

But still the manufacture and sale continued. Reports came in that half-beaver hats were being made in Paris and other cities, and in greater quantities than ever at Lyon and Rouen. Worse yet, some of the hatters of Paris were selling, as pure beaver hats, hats made of wool and beaver fur. A new decree was therefore issued on April 15, 1673. It set forth the violations of the older legislation, and pointed out that a continuance of the manufacture and sale of half-beavers might decrease or even destroy entirely the hat trade. It went on to

<sup>57</sup> See footnote 56 above.

forbid the making or dyeing of half-beaver hats, under penalty of a fine of 3,000 *livres*, to be paid one-half to the poor and one-half to the informer. It urged the wardens of the hatters to renew their efforts and their vigilance and it made liable to fine not only the master hatter and the dyer, but the journeyman who worked on half-beavers and the merchant who sold them.<sup>58</sup>

Where Colbert stood in the matter is clearly indicated by the letter he wrote to Le Blanc, the intendant at Rouen, on August 5, 1678. He said:

The king, having been informed that the manufacture of the hats called half-beavers is greatly injuring trade with Spain and the Indies, where the beaver hats of France have a good market, and that the poor manufacture and the mixture of a variety of fur with that of the beaver is visibly driving this industry into foreign lands and chiefly into Holland, his Majesty has had issued at various times four decrees of his council, to forbid the manufacture of hats called half-beavers; and these decrees are enforced at Paris through the care which the administrative officers take in the matter. But since it has been represented to His Majesty that it is useless to insist on the enforcement of these decrees in Paris, because in numerous cities of the kingdom, and especially in Rouen, this same vicious manufacture goes right on, His Majesty orders me to send you these decrees, and to tell you at the same time that you should have them registered at the secretariat of the administrative officers of that city, and that you should see that they are punctually enforced.<sup>59</sup>

In a dozen other fields regulation by the government was undertaken under Colbert, either by decree or by statutes and regulations modeled on the old guild ordinances. Frequently the regulation was suggested or drawn up by the intendant of a given district, and sometimes the intendant was given discretion in imposing regulations. Daguesseau, for instance, drew up regulations for tar-making in the generality of Bordeaux, and Colbert had them approved by a decree of the Council of State of June 13, 1672. Nine years later Colbert gave this same intendant authority to regulate the manufacture of *vert-de-gris* in Languedoc. In 1670 the intendant of Flanders was allowed by Colbert to issue an ordinance forbidding the use of fish oil in soap. The old regulations, largely fiscal in character, on the iron industry, remained in force under Colbert, but he modified them somewhat and readjusted

<sup>58</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 410-11; "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 290-93; *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 148-50.

<sup>59</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8751, fol. 341; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 692.

the taxes (1680). Colbert's Ordinance of the Marine, in part represented an elaborate regulation of the building and repair of ships. Even more detailed was the general regulation for the paper industry (1671). It ordered the purchase of rags by uniform weight, insisted on certain processes in the preparation of the rag pulp and the making of the paper, and fixed the size of a ream of paper at five hundred sheets.<sup>60</sup>

The goldsmiths were subjected to repeated regulation (1672, 1673, 1677, 1679, 1680), partly fiscal, partly industrial in character. These enactments made it obligatory to have all gold and silverware inspected and marked, and established substantial fees for such inspection and marking. A general regulation issued by the Council of State on December 30, 1679, sought to limit the number of goldsmiths to 300. Somewhat more surprising was a regulation for those engaged in financial operations at Lyon. It was drawn up locally in June, 1667, and it was approved by a royal decree of July 7, 1667. It regulated letters of credit, loans, notes, interest, foreign-exchange transactions, and so forth.<sup>61</sup>

*Summary.*—Despite these diverse ventures into other fields, the fact remains that the bulk of Colbert's regulation, and the most important part thereof, had to do with the textile industries. Two-thirds of the regulations dealing with the industry of the period of Colbert printed in the official collection, dealt with textiles and, though there were many that were omitted in this *Recueil*, the proportion of the total was probably roughly the same. Colbert's regulations were, on the whole, much less numerous, much shorter, much less detailed, and much more flexible than those issued in the 60 or 70 years after his death. There were probably less than 200 regulations of any importance in the 22 years from 1661 to 1683. There were more than 1,000 for the seventy years, 1683–1753, and the later ones were, on the whole, longer and more detailed.<sup>62</sup>

### 3. THE ENFORCEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL REGULATIONS

The preparation and promulgation of industrial regulations was but a part, and perhaps the lesser part, of Colbert's regulatory activity.

<sup>60</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 218 ff., 352–53.

<sup>61</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 219; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,789, fols. 70–83; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,740, fol. 276.

<sup>62</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 210, 211, 213.



Such regulations had been drawn up and issued before. What was more significant was Colbert's persistent effort to enforce the regulations and to build up a machinery through which such enforcement could be maintained.

*The inspectors of manufactures.*—From time to time, especially under Richelieu, regulatory decrees had provided for the creation of inspectors of manufactures. But these offices were usually sold and the purpose of the legislation was as much to assure the collection of fees as to enforce standards of quality. Under Colbert there was developed a new system, under which was built up a body of *commis*, or inspectors of manufactures, who were directly responsible to the *contrôleur-général* and whose chief function was to secure the meticulous observance of the industrial regulations that had been issued.<sup>63</sup>

The most important of these officials created by Colbert were a small group of inspectors-general, appointed for longer and shorter periods, and with both special and unrestricted spheres of activity. Thus Jean Camuset was inspector-general for the wool-stocking industry for many years, while for shorter periods Amonnet was inspector-general for the lace industry, Gilbert for linens, Landais and Berthelot for forges and other establishments, Perrot for dyeing, and Berryer for industry in general.<sup>64</sup>

Of all the inspectors-general, the most regular in status and the most vital in Colbert's plans and efforts was Bellinzani. On December 29, 1669, Colbert, in his own name, issued to Bellinzani a commission, giving him authority to visit and inspect manufactures of all sorts. It stressed the fact that the king had granted many privileges to industrialists on special conditions and that it was necessary to have someone go to the various establishments to make sure that the entrepreneurs were living up to their bargains. Indeed it was Bellinzani's special function to check up on the manufacturers operating under royal privileges.<sup>65</sup> Typical of Bellinzani's duties in this regard was his journey in October, 1670. On the eighth of the month Colbert instructed him to visit and report on the privileged establishments at Meaux and La-Ferté-sous-

<sup>63</sup> Bacquié, *Les Inspecteurs des manufactures sous l'ancien régime*, pp. 4 ff. (though this work contains much valuable material, it must be used with great care, since the author has made a good many mistakes); Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 20 ff.

<sup>64</sup> Bacquié, *Les Inspecteurs des manufactures sous l'ancien régime*, p. 19.

<sup>65</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 355-56; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 289-90, docs. 2 and 3.

Jouarre. On the fourteenth Bellinzani sent the minister a letter and a detailed report on these manufactures. By the next month Bellinzani had visited Tournai, Courtrai, Lille, and Arras, and was planning to go on to Amiens, Abbéville, Beauvais, Pontoise, and Saint-Germain.<sup>66</sup>

While Bellinzani was chiefly occupied with the privileged establishments, he occasionally worked on the enforcement of the regulations covering the activity of the regular non-privileged industries. But usually this duty was left to the ordinary corps of inspectors built up by Colbert—one of his chief contributions to the economic machinery of the old regime. The inspectors worked under the authority of commissions issued by Colbert and revokable by him. To him they reported, and to him they were directly responsible. In general, they were chosen from outside the district in which they were to operate, in order to ensure their impartiality of judgment and action. This group of inspectors was created by Colbert in 1669 and 1670, at the time of the issuance of the general manufacturing regulations, and their chief function was to enforce these regulations. At first their number was eighteen, but by 1683 it had grown to twenty-four. By 1715 there were thirty-four, and the number of inspectors tended to increase throughout the old regime.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 560-63; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 155, fols. 286-90, 316, 349-50.

<sup>67</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 20-22, 221-23; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 232-33; Bacquière, *Les Inspecteurs des manufactures sous l'ancien régime*, pp. 365 ff., and *passim*.

The list of inspectors, or *commis*, of manufactures under Colbert, as given by Boissonnade (*Colbert*, pp. 20-21) is:

Champagne and Les Trois-Évêchés: Passavent, then Maréchal and Camusat; Beauvais and Picardy: Desrués and Macaire; Upper Normandy: Picquet; Lower Normandy: Duchesne; Perche and pays de Dreux: Charles Pocquelin; generalities of Orléans and Moulins: Mullard and Richier; and later Imbert and Batissier; Touraine, Maine, Anjou, and Brittany: Grécourt and Charrier, then Vuillard and Bodin; Poitou united to Aunis and Anjou: Billot, then Richier; Berry and Sologne: Biarnois, then Charrier; Guyenne, Saintonge, Angoumois, Limousin, and Auvergne: Le Poupet, then Dalbine; Languedoc and Provence: Cogaïne and Bourneuf; Lyonnais, Beaujolais, and (for a while) Dauphiné: Pierre Pocquelin, then Le Pape; Burgundy and Bresse: Les Gras, then Baillot, then Bergeron; for the linens of Normandy (1676 ff.): Desrués and Cogaïne; for the linens of Beaujolais (1680 or 1682 ff.): sieur Havart; for the manufacture of woad (1670 ff.): probably Albo, a dyer of Toulouse.

Most of the inspectors were selected from the ranks of the merchants and a large number of them came from Paris. It is interesting to compare the above list with a partial one dating from 1693, ten years after Colbert's death, which may be compiled from the report on manufactures to be found in MS. G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1685. It shows that the districts had largely been regularized on the basis of generalities, and that the personnel created by Colbert had been largely superseded. This partial list of 1693 is as follows:

The duties of the new *commis*, or inspectors, are clearly indicated in the formal instructions given by the king and Colbert on August 13, 1669, to those first appointed. The king informed the new officials that they were being sent into the provinces for one prime purpose—to enforce the general regulations on manufacturing. Colbert's instructions were much more detailed and complete. In sixty-five articles he elaborated specifically what the inspectors were to do and explained in detail how they were to start their work. Colbert's instructions were so important in the scheme of regulation that they become precedents, and some portions of them were given the force of law. They may be summarized, article by article, thus:

1. The inspectors are to report to the intendant and get orders from him.
2. They are to go then to the nearest manufacturing city and see the *maire*, the *échevins*, and any judges having jurisdiction over manufactures, and deliver to them the letters from the intendant. They are to ask if the regulations have been registered at the *Hôtel de Ville* and made public. If not, they are to see that this is done the next day.
3. The *maires* and *échevins* are to have jurisdiction over manufactures in places where they already have such powers. In other places the *juges ordinaires* are to have jurisdiction.

<i>Generality</i>	<i>Inspector</i>
Toulouse	Bosson
Montpellier	De la Marque
Montauban	Le Poupet
Clermont	Herier de Fontclaire
Limoges	Herier de Fontclair
Dauphiné	David
Provence	David
Burgundy and parts of the generalities of Paris and Orléans	Barollet
Tours, and the provinces of Maine and Anjou	Ruffin
Orléans	Cottard
Champagne	Blampignon and Mandonnet
Soissonais	Blampignon
Châlonnais	Mandonnet
Amiens	Ticquet
Rouen	Cauvier
Caen	Bocquet
Alençon	Balmier
Poitou	Bonneval
Berry and Bourbonnais	Pré de Siègle
Bordeaux and the Parlement of Pau	Fourestier
Department of Beauvais, including part of the generalities of Paris and of Amiens	Chauvelin

4. The inspectors are to find out if the industry of the given city is organized in guild form (*maitrise*). If so, they are to see whether the masters are registered at the *Hôtel de Ville*, on the register of the *juge ordinaire* and on that of the guild. If not, this is to be done and no one not so registered is to work as a master, "so as to compose by this means a group and organization [*corps et communaute*] of capable persons, and close the door to the ignorant."

5. Where no guild organization exists, the inspectors are to assemble the masters or those working as masters. If there are no wardens, the masters are to elect some. If they refuse to do so, the *juge ordinaire* is to name them. If a master refuses to come to the meeting, he is to be fined 20 *sous*. If he refuses to act as a warden, he is to be fined 30 *livres*, and more if he persists in his refusal.

6. The wardens are to remain in office at least a year. If the *juge ordinaire* finds the burden too heavy on them, he may divide them into two groups and have each act during alternate weeks.

7. To avoid trouble and jealousy, the inspectors are to be careful to refer to the *échevins* and to the *juge ordinaire* all matters belonging to the jurisdiction of those officials.

8. Each guild is to have a register in which is to be included the general regulations on manufacturing, the statutes of the guild, the list of masters and apprentices, reports of meetings, and reports by the wardens.

9. Each guild is to have a room in the *Hôtel de Ville*, or near-by, for the meetings and for the inspection and marking of goods. Disputes are to be settled quickly, so as "to hold the wardens to their duty and to imprint fear on the minds of the workers and artisans." In the larger towns, it is a good idea to have an *échevin* present at the inspection and marking of goods. As merchants know goods "and as it is to their interests that they should be perfect," the *échevins* are to choose for a three-month term a notable merchant to be present twice a week at the inspection and marking of goods.

10. The inspectors are to find out if the regulations have been distributed by the wardens to each master. If not, they are to be printed and distributed immediately. Each master is to sign on the register, saying that he has received a copy of the regulations and promises to abide by them.

11. The inspectors are to assemble all wardens and masters in the room of the guild, to read them the regulation, to explain each article, and to tell them "that if they contravene it, their ruin will inevitably ensue, because their cloths will be confiscated and the selvages torn publicly, because their goods will be inspected not only by the local wardens, but also by the wardens of the merchants of the cities and the fairs where the cloth is taken to be sold." "So the only resource for these workers is to work well; and if they do this, their goods will enjoy a bigger sale than in the past, since less of

them will come from foreign lands. Do not omit to show them, on this point, that goods of the same name, kind, and quality should be uniform throughout as regards their length, width, and strength, and that the workers of one place will have no indirect advantage over those of another in the sale of their goods, save only that of making them better."

12. In each city and town there are to be two marks in the hands of the wardens of each guild—one to mark old goods which do not conform to the regulations, the other for those that do; and on both marks is to be the name of the place of manufacture.

13. To prevent misuse of the mark for old goods, the inspector, after all old cloths have been marked, is to have the imprint of the mark taken for reference purposes, and is then to have the mark broken into pieces. The report of this breaking is to be signed by the wardens, judges, and so forth. Where the workers are really trying to make over their looms, and where something has delayed the marking of the old defective cloth, as much as two weeks' grace may be allowed.

14. All new goods must have the name of the weaver at the top of the piece of cloth, woven in, and not put in with a needle. The new mark must not be put on any piece of cloth which lacks such a name. If the new mark is put on a piece of cloth and a second inspection shows it to be defective, it is to be confiscated, and the cost of the confiscation is to fall, not on the weaver nor the artisan, but on the warden who marked the piece incorrectly, the presumption being that the warden marked it "maliciously and fraudulently."

15. The wardens are to inspect all looms. If they have not been made over to conform to the new dimensions, they are to report to the *échevins*, who are to order the changes made within two weeks, under penalty of a fine of 20 *sous* for each loom not made over.

16. Each month the wardens are to visit all the houses of workers. If the houses are located in distant villages or hamlets, the wardens may appoint sub-wardens to make the inspections and mark the goods. If the manufacture is considerable, the name of the village or hamlet is to be on the mark used by the sub-wardens.

17. The inspectors are to see that all woolens and linens from a foreign land or from outside a city, brought to a city to be sold, are taken directly to the markets and are there inspected by the wardens of the drapers. If they conform to the regulations, they are to be marked. If they do not, they are to be confiscated. The wardens are to keep a register of the goods marked or confiscated. Any unmarked goods received by a merchant in his house or store are to be confiscated. Where fairs are held in cities, the inspection and marking is to be at the fairs, not at the markets. For goods from outside a city the mark used is to bear on one side the words "*Marchandises foraines*" on the other a *fleur-de-lys* and around it the words "*Gardes drapiers de tel lieu*."

18. The inspector is to make a list of all the important fairs at which cloth is sold in his department. He is to go to them with the local wardens and judges, to inspect the goods to see if they conform to the regulations and have been marked at the place of their manufacture. If not, they are to be confiscated and their selvages torn immediately and publicly, unless they are marked with the "old mark." But since it is important not to disturb trade at fairs and since small things can interrupt it, the inspectors should proceed with "prudence, tact and vigilance, on the days and at the hours most convenient to the buyers and sellers," and they should "suggest to all the merchants that they should no longer buy narrow goods and ones that do not conform to the regulations, showing them that the penalty of confiscation will fall directly on them," and that even if they are allowed to recover from the manufactures, still they will have to pay a fine for having bought defective goods.

19. The inspectors are to see that the wardens make a note of the defects found and draw up suggestions for the improvement of the industry, and keep a register of all defective cloth discovered, so that the inspectors can see what workers are at fault.

20. Once a piece of cloth is marked at the place of manufacture and at a city to which it is taken, it need not be marked again, even if taken to other cities and fairs.

21. The fullers shall mark the cloth as it is taken from their vessels.

22. All marks on cloth are to be of lead.

23. The inspectors shall keep a mark from each place for purposes of comparison.

24. The inspectors are to be very strict on the width, strength and quality of cloth. Weavers are not to limit themselves to the number of threads prescribed by local statutes and ordinances, if the cloth has not been brought thereby up to the proper dimensions, strength, and quality. The regulation merely sets minimums for the number of threads, since both linen and woolen threads vary in size from place to place.

25. As to the length of pieces of cloth, the inspectors shall enforce the regulation that a piece may be an ell or an ell and a half longer than required, since fulling changes the length. But the width must be exactly as required, for "the length does not affect the public as the width does."

26. The inspectors shall see that weavers make their warp out of the same wool and of the same length for each piece of cloth, as this will make it easy to get the width uniform. They are to see that no bad wool is mingled with good.

27. The inspectors are to stimulate all masters and workers making fine woolens in the Spanish or Dutch style or *draps du sceau* "to make them in the greatest possible perfection and quantity, so as to establish the trade in the manufactures of France firmly, and so as to do without foreigners."

Makers of fine cloth are wrong if they turn to the manufacture of *droguets*, since the style will change, and they will have lost their aptitude for making fine cloth.

28. Certain merchants introduced the "abuse" of narrow cloth by getting weavers to reduce the widths prescribed by old and recent ordinances. This abuse still continues in some places, prevents the enforcement of the new regulations, and injures those merchants who obey the regulations, since they cannot compete in price with the defective goods. This reduces the sale of honest cloth and increases the sale of defective cloth. The inspectors are therefore to seek out any merchants who get weavers to make narrow cloth. Such merchants shall be forbidden by the judges or *échevins* to do any business, and shall be fined besides. Such punishments shall be widely publicized, to serve as an example. The inspectors shall inform Colbert of the names of such merchants, so as to enable him to prevent their doing business anywhere.

29. The inspectors are to find out where narrow and defective goods are made and where they are sold, and to seek "to repress these abuses by all legitimate means."

30. Each inspector is to have a trustworthy agent who understands manufactures in every place where manufactures are established. These agents are to discover abuses and suggest ways of improving manufacturing.

31. Inspectors shall see that drapers, serge-makers, and fullers, in working on white or dyed cloth, do not change its dimensions.

32. Inspectors are to have the shearers of cloth and serges inspected rigorously, and to "enforce severely" article 53 of the regulation, which concerns them.

33. Inspectors shall prevent the mixing of different qualities of wool in bales, since that makes the quality of the cloth vary.

34. Many abuses exist in the measurement of goods, bringing "trouble to commerce and notable injury to the workers and artisans." The inspectors are therefore to enforce article 44 of the regulation, and to see that measurements are made accurately without the extra length at the end of the ell. They are to prevent the seller's giving the merchant more than one and a quarter ells extra, "for good measure," in each twenty-one and a quarter ells, and even this excess measurement is to be given only on cloths for which it has become customary, and it is not to be extended to others. If the regulations on measurement are contravened, the inspector shall see that the measurer is put out of office and the purchasing merchant is fined 100 *livres*. To prevent cheating, each piece of cloth is to have a tag on it stating its true length.

35. The inspectors shall see that all weights and measures conform to the old ordinances. Any which do not are to be confiscated.

36. In conformity with article 45 of the regulation, the inspectors are to see that merchant drapers buying goods from manufacturing drapers or serge-

makers at a fair or market, pay within two or three days at most after delivery. If not, they are to pay 40 *sous* a day for each extra day.

37. When wardens go out of office, they are to turn over all registers and papers to their successors, and one month later, in the presence of the *échevins* or of the ordinary administrative judge, are to render an account of what they have done.

38. A weaver or maker of cloth can act as a broker, provided he does not trade on his own account, except in cloth that he has made.

39. Under penalty of loss of office, inspectors are to do no trading of any sort, in any way, directly or indirectly, on their own account, or for any one else.

40. The inspectors are to find out if Colbert's orders against the seizure of sheep are being obeyed. If not, they are promptly to notify the intendant.

41. Each inspector is to find out how many sheep there are in his district, how many could be raised, and what districts produce the best wool.

42. Inspectors are to draw up *mémoires* on all that is said about the regulations. If anything has been omitted, if anything is not clear, if anything interferes with the protection of manufacturing or the increase of trade, the *échevins* are to assemble the most skillful merchants and master workers in the *Hôtels de ville*, to secure their opinions and to draw up a report.

43. The inspectors are to enforce the general regulations as to masters, journeymen, and apprentices. "There is no better way to make them live in good order, avoid lawsuits and trickery, and render them capable in their craft, than to follow them exactly," or to follow the orders laid down in special statutes approved by the *Conseil Royale de Commerce*. If banquets or initiations for the mastership are held, or too great fees levied for taking the oath as warden, or for the examination of masterpieces, or for letters of mastership, or if the *échevins* take fees or gifts in cases pertaining to manufacturing, then the inspector shall inform the intendant and bring action immediately against the offenders. Colbert had been informed that some judges and their clerks were charging as high as 15 or 20 *livres* to inscribe a master of a craft on their registers. All that they have a right to charge is 20 *sous*. Inspectors are to force the restitution of any sums taken over the legal amount.

44. Inspectors are to find out about any disputes among the drapers, mercers, serge-makers, and dyers, and to try to settle them amicably. If necessary, they are to use the authority of the *échevins*, or even of the intendants, to settle such disputes. They are to inform Colbert of those who refuse to accept friendly settlements or who have stirred up such lawsuits.

45. For the enforcement of the regulation of the dyers of woollens, the inspectors are to make the master dyers register at the *Hôtel de Ville* and on the register of the ordinary judges. The masters are to elect wardens. A copy of the regulation is to be given to each master, and he is to sign a receipt and to promise to obey it.



46. The inspectors are to see if there are enough master dyers in each town and if not they are to increase the number as provided in the regulation. The inspectors are also to see that the dyers are properly equipped, and are to have a mark to put on the cloth they dye.

47. The inspectors shall make sure that a merchant is appointed to inspect and mark all goods that have been dyed, that samples of the various colors are provided, as ordered by the regulation, and that dyes are made of the proper ingredients.

48. Woolens suspected of false dyeing are to be boiled, as provided by article 37.

49. Merchants who wish their cloth dyed scarlet, violet, *pensée*, greenish-brown, or greenish-gray should first have it specially treated. Dyers should leave a rosette undyed.

50. The inspectors are to tell dyers that, beside the local inspection, the cloth they dye will be inspected at all cities and fairs and confiscated if it does not conform to the regulations or is not marked, and that inspectors have been sent into all the provinces of the kingdom.

51. The inspectors shall prevent any who are not master dyers from having charge of dyeing establishments, and they shall make masters, journeymen, and apprentices observe the regulations.

52. Regulations on the dyeing of silk and of textiles made of linen and wool are to be enforced as for woolens. As provided by article 38, a single dyer is to be appointed to dye silks *à demi bain*, vulgarly called dyeing "on the raw" [*sur le cru*].

53. The inspectors are to have samples of all colors and shades in silk made and they are to prevent several dyers from lodging in the same house, or keeping the same shop, unless their work and their dyes are similar.

54. The inspectors are to see that master dyers of silk mark the bolts they have dyed and keep a register thereof, as provided in the regulations.

55. The most frequent and important abuse occurs in the dyeing of silk black. This is to be done as provided in the regulation, and each inspector is to "attach himself strongly to the complete execution of these articles." "And since there is no more beautiful black, nor lighter, nor more useful to the public than that of the taffetas popularly called 'taffetas of luster black of Lyon,' it is absolutely necessary that all the other blacks should be of the same quality, and that the dyers should make no others."

56. The inspectors should notice what places are suited to what dyes, because of the local water, herbs, roots, and leaves, "so as to oblige those of the surrounding country to send their stuffs there to be dyed," it being noteworthy "that good dyeing increases greatly the quality, the beauty, and the price of their fabrics, although it costs little more than mediocre or bad dyeing."

57. The inspectors shall examine the places most fit for producing trees,

roots, fruits, leaves, herbs, and so forth, used for dyes, such as woad, and consult with the *échevins* and the judges as to how to get them planted in these places, "showing them how useful it will be to them."

58. The inspectors shall examine all places suitable for the establishment or the increase of manufacturing, together with the number of men there and their energy and ability.

59. The inspectors shall make a list of places where commerce and manufacturing are established, of what sorts, kinds, processes, and qualities. They shall secure samples and data as to the dimensions, prices, yearly production, and number of looms.

60. In conjunction with the *échevins*, in cities where *hôpitaux* are established, the inspectors shall look into the means of employing the poor and idle in industry and of furnishing them with the necessary tools, looms, and materials.

61. The *échevins*, administrative judges, and guild wardens shall aid the inspectors, admit them to meetings, allow them to talk there, and advise and assist them to the best of their ability. All masters, dyers, workers, and artisans shall admit the inspectors to their houses, shops, and stores to inspect goods there, whenever and as often as required.

62. As soon as an inspector arrives in a city or large town, the *échevins* shall hold a "Council of the Administration of Manufactures" in the *Hôtel de Ville* and, if there are no *échevins*, the administrative judge shall do so. The inspector, all wardens, all older masters, and all who have held offices, and such a number of other masters, merchants, and notable bourgeois as seems proper, shall attend. This Council shall discuss ways and means to enforce the regulations and these instructions, to improve commerce and especially "to mark on this occasion a perfect obedience to the wishes of His Majesty."

63. If an inspector thinks that the wardens are not doing their duty well, he shall complain to the *échevins* or to the administrative judge, and they shall take up the matter. If no results are thus secured, the inspector is to complain to the intendant of the province, who shall go to the spot and give the necessary orders. The inspectors are to report to Colbert on all such matters, and are to include in their reports the names and dwellings of the *maires* and *échevins* who are "the most capable and best-intentioned."

64. In any disputes as to who is to receive the fines levied in matters of manufacturing, the inspector is to explain to the parties the will of the king—that is, in areas of royal justice one-half is to go to the king, and in areas of inferior jurisdictions that half is to go to the lord who possessed the judicial rights before the regulation. The other half is to be divided equally between the poor of the district and the wardens.

65. The inspectors are to be ready to send reports to Colbert. They are to write him letters every two weeks. They are to let him know where he is

to send them his orders. They are to work with "industry, prudence, fidelity, affection, and vigilance." <sup>68</sup>

When the inspectors reached the districts to which they were assigned, they were in some cases installed in office with a good deal of formality. Pierre Pocquelin, the inspector for Lyonnais, was the center of an elaborate ceremony at the *Hôtel de Ville* of Lyon. In the presence of the chief officials, merchants, and manufacturers, the intendant welcomed Pocquelin, and explained to the audience the wishes of the king in connection with the enforcement of the regulation, and the duties of the new inspectors. The *prévôt des marchands* then testified as to "the perfect submission of all the workers and people" of Lyon to the orders of the king. And the consulate of the city ordered the registration of Pocquelin's commission.<sup>69</sup>

In conformity with article 30 of the instruction, some of the inspectors, at least, appointed agents to represent them in the various manufacturing towns. Billot, inspector for Poitou and Anjou, for example, on September 18, 1670, commissioned Silvain Drouillon, merchant draper of Niort, to be his agent in that city.<sup>70</sup>

At first the salaries of the inspectors were paid from the royal funds destined for the aid and encouragement of manufactures. Their salaries were usually about 1,800 *livres* a year, plus amounts varying from 300 to 1,000 *livres* for their traveling and other expenses. They might also receive "gratifications" for special services. The regular expenditure on the new service was some 34,500 *livres* in 1672, and 36,000 *livres* in 1673.<sup>71</sup>

As in so many other fields, the financial exigencies occasioned by the Dutch war forced Colbert to a change in policy, which represented a backward step. By a decree of December 31, 1675, it was ordered that the salaries of the inspectors were to be paid from the fees of one *sou* per piece charged by the wardens for inspecting and marking cloth, and from the quarter of the fines levied in industrial cases which had been assigned to the wardens by the regulations. The decree explained

<sup>68</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 64-89; sup. I, 172-73; for another copy of Colbert's instructions, see "Manuscrits français," No. 21,785, fols. 65 ff.; see also "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, pp. 551-52, for special instructions given to one inspector. The general instructions are reprinted in Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 832-41.

<sup>69</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, doc. 4, pp. 290-91.

<sup>70</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, doc. 5, pp. 291-92.

<sup>71</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 21; Guiffrey (ed.), *Comptes des bâtiments du roi*, Vol. I, cols. 152, 373, 481, 557, 640, 707, and *passim*.

that the sums from these sources were sufficient not only to pay for all the expenses of the wardens and the maintenance of the offices for the inspection of cloth, but also to defray the salaries in question. It added that the wardens had not kept accurate registers of the fees collected, and it ordered them to do so.<sup>72</sup>

The new system was obviously less satisfactory than the old. In Normandy, for example, Colbert on May 9, 1676, ordered the intendant, Le Blanc, to see that the inspector was paid from the wardens' fees. But a year later he had to write again to say that the king had heard that the wardens of the manufacturing drapers of Rouen and other cities were keeping false registers and withholding all the fees collected, on the grounds that the total product was insufficient to pay their expenses. Colbert told Le Blanc to explain to them that if they did not promptly pay the inspector, the king would farm the collection of the fees and pay the inspector from the sums thus realized.<sup>73</sup>

The fees for the marking of textiles, which originally seem to have been intended merely as nominal sums to cover necessary expenditures, thus assumed a somewhat different significance. The result was that they tended to rise and to become an object of interest to the central government. This tendency is to be seen in an elaborate schedule of fees to be collected for the inspection and marking of linen, as decreed by the Royal Council of Finances on July 22, 1681. No longer were the fees nominal. They were set at figures varying from 2 *sous*, 8 *deniers* to 20 *sous*, 3 *deniers* on a score of different types and sizes of linens.<sup>74</sup> But by that time Colbert had come to accept the new system, for early in the next year he wrote the intendant at Toulouse that it was better that the inspectors be paid from the fees for the marking of textiles than that they should be a burden on the towns or on commerce.<sup>75</sup>

*Enforcement by royal, municipal, and guild officials.*—The first article of the instructions had ordered the inspectors to report to the intendants, and in difficulties they were authorized to call on the intendants for help. Repeatedly Colbert ordered the intendants to assist the inspectors in enforcing the regulations. On December 9, 1676, for instance, he wrote Le Blanc that the king was sending the sieurs Desrues and Cogaïne to enforce the linen regulation in Normandy. The intendant was to help and protect them and to issue any ordinances

<sup>72</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 87–89.

<sup>73</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8751, fols. 54, 169.

<sup>74</sup> AD XI, No. 52, *liasse* 1, decree of July 22, 1681.

<sup>75</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 728–29; cf. "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 171.

which they needed in their work.<sup>76</sup> The intendants were also supposed to watch the inspectors and see that they fulfilled their functions. On December 16, 1682, Colbert wrote to Nointel, intendant at Tours, urging him to see that the inspector did his duty. Six months later, on June 23, 1683, he wrote to Basville, telling him to see if the inspector was "doing his duty well." To Morangis he wrote on September 3, 1681, directing him to tell the inspectors to maintain the dimensions of all textiles, "there being nothing which supports and increases manufactures in the kingdom so much as keeping them up to the goodness which they should have and which is established by the regulations."<sup>77</sup>

The intendants were also supposed to exert themselves directly to secure the enforcement of the regulations. On January 2, 1682, Colbert wrote the intendant at Rouen, telling him that there were many complaints about the nonenforcement of the regulations in his district and that he was to take steps to enforce them. On October 21 he wrote to the same intendant, saying that there was much complaint in the East India trade of the defective size and quality of the linens from Rouen, and asking him to see that the regulations were enforced so that these textiles would have "the same reputation that they used to have in the Indies." Or again, on February 6, 1682, Colbert wrote to Morangis, urging him to help enforce the regulation on linens, since he could do "nothing more useful for the people," it being "certain in regard to linens that they have increased in esteem in the three or four years since the new regulations were made and more carefully enforced."<sup>78</sup>

Some of the intendants made real efforts to enforce the manufacturing regulations and even went into detailed matters concerning industrial processes. Basville, intendant at Poitiers, for example, reported to Colbert on May 4, 1682, that the manufacture of cloth and serge at Niort was in good shape. He had strongly urged the workers to obey the regulations, and the *maire* and *échevins* to enforce them. He had found there that the cloth was being stretched too much during fulling, and he had put an end to this practice, since it was contrary to the regulations and tended to make the fabric shrink later.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>76</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8751, fol. 128; cf. "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 270.

<sup>77</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 391-92; "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fol. 247; "Collection Clairambault," No. 465, fol. 132.

<sup>78</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 724-25, 740, also 650-51; "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 171.

<sup>79</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 449, letter from Basville to Colbert, May 4, 1682.

As in his other work, Colbert used auxiliaries of all sorts, in addition to the intendants, in his effort to enforce the industrial regulation. Merchants, officials, nobles, churchmen were all called upon to help. The archbishop of Lyon, even, was exhorted by Colbert, in a letter of January 3, 1672, to strive to have the regulations enforced.<sup>80</sup>

Next to the inspectors, however, the most important persons in the enforcement machinery created by Colbert were the *maires* and *échevins* of the towns and the wardens of the guilds. The latter had had authority over manufacturing since time immemorial, and in many towns the municipal officials had long had jurisdiction over various phases of industry. So in employing these functionaries Colbert was making no new departure. In places where, for one reason or another, the municipal officials did not exist or were not capable of acting in industrial matters, judges of inferior courts were given jurisdiction.<sup>81</sup>

To make sure that the *maires* and *échevins* of the towns had full and proper legal authority over manufactures necessitated a number of enactments to cut through entangling jurisdictions. The first of these was contemporary with the great woolen regulation. In August, 1669, an edict was issued over the signatures of Colbert and the king. It explained the necessity of regulations and went on to say that disputes might arise over their enforcement which might distract the workers and disrupt business, if they were "not treated summarily before judges having an especial acquaintance with this matter." The edict accordingly gave to the *maires*, *échevins*, *capitouls*, *jurats*, and other similar officials original jurisdiction over cases involving the size, quality, marking, value, or manufacture of goods, and also over bleaching, dyeing, and wages. In cases involving amounts less than 150 *livres* their decisions were to be final. The procedure was to be summary, without benefit of lawyers or prosecutors. The hearings were to be open and each party was to present his own case. If documents were in question, they were to be presented without formality. The officials acting as judges were to take no fees or gifts (*épices*). The clerks were to charge only 2 *sous* for each written sheet of the judgment. To the same officials was given jurisdiction over the accounts of the wardens of guilds.

The edict went on to provide that where there was a large number of *échevins*, and so forth, only six were to act as the court, to avoid the

<sup>80</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 641.

<sup>81</sup> Gailhard-Bancel, *Les Anciennes Corporations de métiers*, pp. 109 ff.

delays arising from "the multiplicity of judges." Those who knew most about manufactures were to be chosen by the others. Three were to be selected each year, so that there should always be three old ones and three new ones. In smaller cities only two or three *échevins* were to sit on the court. One of the *échevins* on the court must always be, or have been for six years, a merchant. These courts were to give judgment and inflict fines and penalties, in accordance with the royal regulations covering the dispute. Paris and Lyon were excepted from the operation of the edict, as they already had suitable jurisdictions—those of the *prévôt des marchands* and of the *juges conservateurs*.<sup>82</sup>

On the last day of October, 1669, official instructions on the enforcement of the general regulations were issued to the *maires* and *échevins* of the towns. They directed the publication and dissemination of the regulations, the convocation of a meeting of merchants and masters, the selection of a convenient place for the inspection and marking of cloth, the "reformation" of looms that did not conform to the regulations, and the confiscation of narrow cloth after a period of four months. The municipal officials were to see that the regulations on measuring and dyeing cloth were obeyed, and that the guild wardens were elected and were doing their duty.<sup>83</sup>

In the ensuing months a series of decrees upheld and confirmed the authority which had been granted to the municipal officials. On April 19, 1670, a decree excluded perpetual *maires*, who were not elected annually with the *échevins*, from the courts established to try manufacturing cases. On July 22, 1670, another decree forbade the officers of other courts to interfere in cases involving manufactures. On March 15, 1671, a third decree gave original jurisdiction to the *maires* and *échevins* in all cases involving "rebellions" of the workers against the wardens or inspectors who were trying to enforce the regulations. The decree explained that these "rebellions" were likely to occur when defective cloth was seized, and that it was proper for the *maires* and *échevins* to have authority over these matters, to the exclusion of other courts and judges, as long as the offenses and the penalties were of a minor nature. These municipal officials were given the right to levy fines up to 10 *livres* in such cases.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 1-4; cf. sup. I, 94-98.

<sup>83</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 507; cf. sup. I, 100-3, and "Manuscrits français," No. 21,785, fols. 158-59.

<sup>84</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 9-14.

Sometimes the establishment of a tribunal of the *maire* and *échevins* of a city was given the added backing of a special ordinance by the intendant of the district. Such was the case, for example, at Troyes (1670) and in Auvergne (1672). In general the tendency was for the central government not only to uphold, but also to extend the authority of these municipal industrial courts. In 1672, when the *lieutenant-général* of the *baillage* of Rouen tried to take over a case involving the seizure of twenty-three pieces of linen, a royal decree, dated March 26, expressly gave jurisdiction of all cases in that district involving the manufacture of linen to the *échevins* of Rouen. A decree of March 26, 1674, gave all cases involving manufactures to the *échevins* of Orléans, to the exclusion of the *prévôt* of that city. Decrees of more general scope of March 26 and October 8, 1674, confirmed the authority of the *maires* and *échevins* over cases involving seizures.<sup>85</sup>

That the *maires* and *échevins* began regularly to exercise the authority given them by the king and Colbert is clear. But that it was not always exercised in just the manner that Colbert wished is shown by a royal decree of November 18, 1673. This decree declared that the *maires* and *échevins* were not giving their judgments in accordance with the regulations. Instead of the requisite condemnations, fines, and confiscations, they were inflicting milder penalties, "with the result that the merchants, workers, and dyers, and especially those in the provinces of Normandy, Champagne, Orléanais, Burgundy, Poitou, and Dauphiné are daily breaking the regulations on the length, width, dyeing, quality, and goodness of fabrics, trusting, in this fraud, that they will be quit of it for a fine of 15 or 30 *sous* instead of one of 50 to 500 *livres*, as provided by the aforesaid regulations, which should be followed by the aforesaid judges, under penalty of their being held responsible in their own private persons." On Colbert's recommendation, therefore, the king ordered the *maires* and *échevins* to enforce the regulations and to inflict the penalties provided. If they failed to do so, they were to be answerable as individuals.<sup>86</sup>

How lax the *maires* and *échevins* may have been in some cases is indicated by a decree of July 3, 1677. Though they had been repeatedly instructed to provide a room for the inspection and marking of goods,

<sup>85</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 357, docs. 138, 141, 144, 145; *Rec. des règ.*, I, 14-16.

<sup>86</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 358-59, docs. 150, 151, 152, 154, 155; *Rec. des règ.*, I, 17-18; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,785, fols. 82-83.



it seems that some had failed to do so. The decree ordered them to set aside such a room straightway.<sup>87</sup>

In fact, the response of the *maires* and *échevins* to the new or added duties that had been thrust upon them varied considerably from city to city. Under pressure from the inspectors of manufactures, Le Poupet and Billot, the *maire* and *échevins* of Blois on December 6, 1670, set aside an office for the inspection and marking of cloth, took over the jurisdiction of manufactures, agreed to hold sittings every Monday from one to four o'clock in the afternoon, arranged for the breaking of the old mark for cloth and the establishment of the new one, and made provision for the exposure of defective cloth.<sup>88</sup>

The consular judges of Lyon, three days later, agreed to meet every Wednesday at eight o'clock in the morning and devote the session to the enforcement of the regulations. On the same day the *maire* and *échevins* of Chartres issued an order that no cloth was to be sold in the town unless it had been inspected and marked, and that the inspection, markings, and measuring of goods made in Chartres, or brought in from outside, was to be done for fixed fees at the *Hôtel de Ville*, as provided by the royal regulation.<sup>89</sup>

The judges of manufactures at Reims, however, took it upon themselves to modify the general regulations on woolens. Articles 29 and 51 had provided that the weaver should weave his name into the top of each piece of cloth. According to the judges, many of the weavers were unable to do this, since they could not read and write, "being poor folk and little educated." Some had tried for seven or eight months, without success, to learn how to do it. The judges therefore ordered, on December 5, 1670, that until the king ordered otherwise, the name of the weaver might be sewed into the piece of cloth with a needle.<sup>90</sup>

At Poitiers, in July, 1670, the *maire* and *échevins* firmly repulsed an attempt by *juges consuls* of the city to nominate a merchant named Babinet to sit on the court having jurisdiction over manufactures. The case was complicated by the fact that Billot, the inspector of manufac-

<sup>87</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 528-30; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,785, fols. 85-89.

<sup>88</sup> AD XI, No. 42, *liasse* 5, deliberation of the *maire* and *échevins* of Blois, December 6, 1670.

<sup>89</sup> AD XI, No. 42, *liasse* 5, ordinance of the consular judges of Lyon, December 9, 1670, deliberation of the *maire* and *échevins* of Chartres, December 9, 1670.

<sup>90</sup> AD XI, No. 42, *liasse* 5, ordinance of the judges of manufactures of Reims, December 5, 1670.

tures, was supporting the attempt of the *juges consuls*. But the *échevins* appealed to the intendant, pointing out that Babinet had been caught with defective goods and would hardly make a suitable judge.<sup>91</sup>

Colbert, meanwhile, was seeking to uphold the authority of the *échevins* and to stimulate them to activity. When the silk workers of Tours urged that some other body be given power to enforce the regulations, Colbert replied (January 15, 1670) that he would not comply with their request. But he ordered the intendant to watch over the enforcement. On August 22, 1670, Colbert wrote the *maire* and *échevins* of Orléans, urging them to publish and enforce the regulations. On September 2 of the same year he wrote the *échevins* of Chartres that if they did not enforce the regulations, the king would step in and take strong measures to prevent the sale of defective goods. The next spring, on March 6, 1671, Colbert sent a letter to the *prévôt des marchands* and *échevins* of Lyon, to tell them that if they did not enforce the regulations in their city they would destroy its trade, since its goods would not be received anywhere unless properly marked.<sup>92</sup>

In some cities the *maire* and *échevins* arranged for the annual meetings on the state of trade and industry, as required by the regulations. But the practice does not seem to have become as regular or as general as Colbert hoped. As a sample of such meetings may be taken that held at Amiens on January 16, 1671. It was called by the *premier (maire)* and *échevins*, and included the wardens of the guilds, the chief merchants, and so forth. It was agreed that the regulations had been well enforced, that scarcely any defective cloth was being made, and this "perfectly reestablishes the commerce of this city with foreign lands." In addition, the assembly had a number of suggestions to make. It urged that the use of wool taken from the bodies of dead sheep be prohibited, that certain cloths be woven with a warp of damp wool to prevent shrinkage, and that the number of wardens be increased so that they might make more frequent visits, and more effectually enforce the regulations on the number of threads. It was noted that unmarked and defective cloth was being brought into the city from near-by places. It was therefore proposed that it be forbidden to bring into the city any unmarked cloth, and that all weavers be required to live in places where their work could be visited and inspected conveniently by wardens. It

<sup>91</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 354-56, doc. 134.

<sup>92</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 511-12, 544, 549, 610.

was reported that the wardens of the *sayetteurs* were marking defective cloth. So it was decided that two merchants should be present when the goods were marked and that the markers, when not in use, should be locked in a box with three keys, one of which should be given to an *échevin* and one to the merchant. It was further ordered that goods re-dyed, or re-fulled, should be re-marked; that cloth should not be dyed until all the grease had been taken out of it; and that the dyers must be inspected by one of the wardens of the drapers, to make sure that they used good materials. The report of such a meeting as this must have brought joy to Colbert's heart, and made him feel that the industrial renaissance of France was really under way.<sup>93</sup>

Below the *maires* and *échevins*, in Colbert's scheme for the enforcement of the regulations, came the wardens of the guilds. On them fell the burden of the routine inspection of goods, looms, shops, materials, and markets, as well as that of marking goods of the proper quality and reporting infringements of all sorts. If these had been new duties, they would probably have given rise to widespread resentment. But for centuries the wardens of the guilds had been responsible for seeing that goods were of the requisite quality, that working conditions were suitable, that defective goods were seized and confiscated, and that their makers were punished. It had also been customary in most places for the wardens to fix marks to goods that passed inspection.<sup>94</sup>

In 1669, shortly after the issuance of the general regulations, official instructions for the guild wardens were printed and sent out. In considerable detail the duties of the wardens under the new system were explained. Among other things, they were told to make a list of the masters of each craft and give it to the *échevins*; to see that the regulations were printed, distributed, and signed by the masters; to establish offices for the inspection and marking of goods; to provide proper marks, in conformity to the regulations; to make a general inspection of all weavers and merchants, and to mark all the goods found in their houses or shops; to see that the looms were made over wherever necessary; to watch over the measurers of cloth and see that the measuring was properly done; to make sure that cloth was not stretched; to enforce the regulations on the inspection of wool, the preparation of cloth, and

<sup>93</sup> AD XI, No. 43, *liasse* 1, "Procès verbal du conseil de police," Amiens, January, 1671.

<sup>94</sup> Gailhard-Bancel, *Les Anciennes Corporations de métiers*, pp. 140-217; Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 436.

all the processes of dyeing; and to strive to improve and increase the manufacture of fine woollens.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to such tasks, the wardens were frequently given other assignments. For instance, it was provided by decree that the wardens of both the merchant mercers and the merchant drapers were to be responsible for the inspection and marking of cloth brought into Paris from outside the city. In Reims the functions were divided. By a decree of June 4, 1678, it was arranged that the merchant drapers were to inspect and mark all cloth made inside the town, while the mercers were to inspect and mark that which came from outside. Though such duties were made more attractive by the collection of fees therefrom, it is not surprising that in many places the wardens, who were usually busy merchants or manufacturers, found it necessary to make a practice of hiring agents or *visiteurs* to do their inspecting for them.<sup>96</sup>

*Phases of enforcement.*—One of the features of Colbert's enforcement of the manufacturing regulations which received some unfavorable attention from nineteenth-century historians was the public exposure of defective goods and of the persons responsible for the defect. On September 24, 1670, a royal decree was issued, on Colbert's advice, providing additional penalties for violations of the regulations. The decree pointed out that notwithstanding the fines and punishments established by the regulations, goods defective in quality and dimensions were still being sold, "from which the public receives a notable prejudice which cannot be prevented save by the setting up of some penalty more severe than the first ones."

The decree therefore ordered that any defective goods discovered should be publicly exposed on a "post of the height of nine feet," with a sign "containing the name and surname of the merchant or craftsman found at fault." Such a post, together with a *carcan* (an iron collar by which offenders might be attached to the post), was to be set up, at the expense of the wardens of the guilds, in front of the principal door of the place where goods were inspected and marked. The defective goods were to be left exposed for "twice twenty-four hours" and then taken down and torn or burned or confiscated, according to what had been ordered. For the second offense, in addition to having his goods exposed, the offender was to be publicly denounced (*blamé*) in

<sup>95</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 353-58.

<sup>96</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 154-55, 164-72; Germain Martin, *La Grande Industrie sous le règne de Louis XIV*, p. 139.

full assembly of his guild. For the third offense, the culprit was to be installed in the *carcan*, with samples of his goods, for the space of two hours. A careful record of offenses and penalties was to be kept.<sup>97</sup>

In a letter to the intendant of Tours, dated November 13, 1670, Colbert expressed his hearty approval of the new punishments. Shame, he thought, would make the workers and merchants obey the regulations. In various towns the pole was set up in accordance with the decree: in Amiens (November, 1670), in Blois (December, 1670), in Clermont (April, 1672), in Poitiers (March, 1672), and so on. A new decree of February 5, 1671, provided that foreign goods were to be exposed on a pole in the same fashion as French ones, but that for both, samples, rather than whole pieces, might be used. Twelve days later Colbert sent out a circular letter to the *maires* and *échevins* of the various towns, directing them to enforce the manufacturing regulations in general and the decrees providing for the exposure of goods and offenders in particular. That the new penalties were long enforced is indicated by a decree of May 31, 1688, which provided that in the exposure of defective goods on a post, not only the name of the particular worker or merchant found at fault should be attached, but also that of the weaver who made it and of any merchant who sold or resold it. This decree arose out of a case involving the exposure of eight pieces of defective cloth at Reims.<sup>98</sup>

To the modern mind these public penalties for mere business offenses may seem a little severe. But in the seventeenth century they were quite in order, since disgrace before the public played a large part in any punishment. A bankrupt, for instance, might be made to go through the long and humiliating ceremony of the *amende honorable*. It must be remembered, too, that the wardens of the guilds had for centuries inflicted similar penalties. In fact Colbert, in his decrees, was merely taking over standard guild practices and putting the authority of the central government behind them. The ordinary punishments traditionally inflicted by the guild wardens for the manufacture or sale of defective goods included: (1) reparation, in money, or in goods, or by making over the defective piece; (2) denunciation, by the wardens or the older masters, usually before the whole guild; (3) confiscation or

<sup>97</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 524-26.

<sup>98</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 579, 607-8; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 358, docs. 149, 150, 151, 152, 153; AD XI, No. 42, deliberation of the *maire* and *échevins* of Blois, December 6, 1670; *Rec. des règ.*, I, 526-27, sup. I, 198-99.

destruction of the defective goods, frequently with public ceremony in the market place, before the guild hall, or in front of the shop of the offender; (4) fines; (5) exclusion from the guild; (6) bodily punishments or imprisonment. There were a number of cases on record, too, in which some public authority had condemned the maker or seller of defective goods to be ridden through the streets on a donkey or in a cart, to be forced to make *amende honorable*, to be whipped in the market place, to be put in the pillory, to be banished from the kingdom, or to be exposed in an iron cage hung from a pole.<sup>99</sup>

Colbert's attempts to enforce the regulations met with some support, some opposition, and a good deal of apathy. The intendant Chamillart wrote to Colbert from Normandy, in 1669, to say that the makers of cloth and serge in that area were preparing to put into effect the regulations in their entirety, realizing that that was the only way to merit the protection of the king. In 1670 Colbert was congratulating intendants, those of Tours and Rouen for example, for suppressing abuses and enforcing the regulations. In 1674 a number of Paris merchants were decided in their insistence on the value of the regulations.<sup>100</sup>

But the approval of Colbert's efforts was, in general, less vocal than the opposition. Reims, Saint-Lo, Carcassonne, Sedan, Aubusson, Bourges, Lyon, Châteauroux objected, in one fashion or another, to the special regulations made for them. The merchants of Tours asked that the enforcement of the special silk regulation for that town be delayed. The manufacturers of Caen asked for a delay in the enforcement of the general woollens regulations. In November, 1669, the *échevins* of Amiens wrote Colbert to inform him that the special regulations of 1666 had never been enforced because of "the contagious disease that came upon this town a short while after," and to ask for a delay in the enforcement of the new general woollens regulation. In March, 1670, Colbert gave the workers of Amiens a month more of grace before the regulations should be strictly enforced.<sup>101</sup>

In May, 1669, Colbert felt it necessary to issue a decree and to send a letter to the responsible officials in practically all the towns and districts that had special regulations, ordering them to enforce these regu-

<sup>99</sup> Gailhard-Bancel, *Les Anciennes Corporations de métiers*, pp. 186-217.

<sup>100</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fol. 206; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 543; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 34, fols. 3-4.

<sup>101</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 213; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 76-77; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 782; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 359-60; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 520-21.

lations, since reports had come in of laxity and nonenforcement everywhere. To the intendant at Alençon, on August 2, 1670, Colbert wrote, directing him to go to the fair at Guibray, but not to be too strict on the proper marking of goods, since the enforcement of the regulations was not yet thoroughgoing. At Amiens the situation grew so confused, in 1670, that a special decree had to be issued. The *premier (maire)* and *échevins* there had refused to obey the regulations or the king's orders, and had "meditated an attempt against the aforesaid statutes and regulations." The mercers had refused to coöperate in the enforcement and had set up a special marking bureau of their own. The wardens of the mercers and the drapers were in a dispute over the marking, which the *échevins* had tried to compromise. The decree reversed the acts of the *échevins* and ordered the regulations enforced.<sup>102</sup>

In September, 1670, Colbert was writing the intendant at Alençon of the difficulties of stopping the production of defective cloth. If the manufacturers were given the slightest leeway, he declared, they not only continued the old abuses but introduced new ones. The next month he was writing to the archbishop of Lyon to complain that the regulations were not being enforced there.<sup>103</sup>

The kind of violations which were common may be illustrated by two condemnations in 1671. One was against Paul Roujou, warden of the guild of merchant master weavers of silk, of Tours. He had given to a man named Challoire a piece of black silk to work on that was not only narrower than the regulations allowed, but also had too few threads in the warp. By the decision of the *maire* and *échevins* of Tours, acting as a court, the piece in question and the loom and the tools used in making it were confiscated. Roujou was fined 60 *livres*, ousted from his post of warden, and declared incapable of holding office again. The confiscated cloth was to be cut into two pieces and sold. One-third of the proceeds was to go to the king, one-third to the *Hôtel Dieu* of Tours, and one-third to the *Hôpital général* of that city.<sup>104</sup>

The second case was judged by the *échevins* of Amiens, where enforcement seems at last to have gotten under way. It had to do with the Widow Philippe Mal, who had made a piece of camlet, Lille style, one ell too short; and with Christophe de Vaux, who had made a piece

<sup>102</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 204, fols. 101-3; Colbert *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 539-40; *Rec. des règ.*, II, 272-76.

<sup>103</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 545-46, 573 and note 1.

<sup>104</sup> AD XI, No. 42, judgment of the *maire* and *échevins* of Tours, January 19, 1671.

of flame-colored camlet, two and a half ells too short, and also a defective piece of yellow camlet. The cloth was ordered to be cut into three pieces and exposed on a pole with the names of those responsible. The guilty parties were forbidden to exercise their trade for a month. After exposure, the cloth was to be sold, one-half the proceeds going to the city, one-quarter to the *Hôpital général*, and one-quarter to the wardens, who had discovered the matter. The costs of the case were to be borne by the defendants.<sup>105</sup>

A more serious matter was reported from Dreux, by Pocquelin, inspector of manufactures, in March, 1672. It seems that the wardens of the drapers of Dreux had gone out to inspect the cloth being made at the near-by villages of Blévy and Germainville. Finding defective cloth, they had been preparing to seize it, when the weavers had formed a mob and attempted to assassinate the wardens. The wardens had entered a complaint, but the royal prosecutor had held up the matter and prevented a judgment in the affair.<sup>106</sup>

These various types of difficulties in enforcing the regulations continued to the very end of Colbert's life. Indeed they were to some extent accentuated by a certain laxity in enforcement arising from the diversions of the Dutch war. In November, 1681, Colbert was protesting to the intendant, Le Blanc, that the fines being levied in Normandy for violation of the regulations were less than those that had been prescribed. Two months later he wrote the same intendant, to tell him that complaints were coming in about the nonenforcement of regulations. Le Blanc was to aid the inspectors and to inform the *maires* and *échevins* that if they did not do their duty, the king would take away their jurisdiction over industry. In March of the next year, Colbert was ordering the intendant at Tours to stop the violations of the regulations on button-making at Luynes.<sup>107</sup>

The failure of the *échevins* of the various cities to enforce the regulations was a persistent source of exasperation to Colbert. On July 22, 1683, just a few weeks before his death, he wrote to the intendant de Bezons thus:

You did well also to let the *échevins* of Romorantin know that the *taille* on their city would be increased if they did not see that the fabrics con-

<sup>105</sup> AD XI, No. 42, judgment of the *échevins* of Amiens, February 6, 1671.

<sup>106</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 793, fol. 374.

<sup>107</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8752, fols. 544, 566, and cf. fol. 552; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 730; "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 58.



formed to the regulations; the care with which you keep yourself informed of what the inspector of manufactures is doing will aid greatly in producing this good effect in your generality.<sup>108</sup>

Six days later he wrote to the intendant d'Ormesson on a similar matter:

As to the merchants of Roannes who made false marks so as to sell linens which did not conform to the regulations, you must let the matter be judged by the judges to whom the king has given jurisdiction over it, but you should see that they judge promptly and in conformity to the regulations.<sup>109</sup>

A decree of April 15, 1684, gives an inkling of the kind of difficulties that troubled Colbert's last days. The decree set forth the following facts. The *premier* and *échevins* of Amiens had appealed to the king. They claimed that since 1669 they had been endeavoring to enforce the regulations, especially those on dyeing, "since good and bad dyeing of fabrics greatly increases and decreases their value." In the course of their efforts, they had rendered judgment of confiscation and fines against a number of persons who had broken the dyeing regulations. They had been greatly troubled by Isabelle Regnard, widow of Jean Falempin, dyer of Amiens. They had repeatedly fined her, confiscated cloth from her, and forbidden her for intervals to ply her trade. They had fined or otherwise punished her on August 8, 1682, and on January 28, March 24, May 12, and August 3, 1683. Each time the sentence had been executed without complaints by the widow.

Then on September 14, 1683, they decreed confiscation of twenty pieces of goods, incorrectly dyed by her. This penalty was later modified to a fine of 40 *livres*. None the less, the widow appealed the case to the *Parlement* of Paris and, by claiming that she had not violated the general regulation on dyeing, she got a favorable decision. She further confused the issue by insisting that she had been dyeing the goods in question not *musc* color, but *poil de boeuf* color.

The royal decree proceeded to reverse the action of the *Parlement* of Paris, upheld that of the *échevins*, confirmed the right of the *échevins* to decide without appeal all cases involving less than 150 *livres*, and fined those who had brought the appeal before the *Parlement* 100 *livres* each. The decree added that if such frequent contraventions as those of the Widow Falempin, and such *entreprise* as her appeal to

<sup>108</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 288-89.

<sup>109</sup> "Collection Clairambault," fol. 303.

*Parlement*, were not "severely repressed," the *échevins* of Amiens would lose prestige, the regulations would be violated with impunity, and industry and trade would be ruined.<sup>110</sup>

*Summary.*—On the whole, it is very difficult to determine how thoroughgoing was the enforcement of industrial regulations under Colbert. But it is perfectly clear that he tried earnestly and persistently to enforce them and that he set up a machinery which, gradually improved over the course of time, made enforcement possible.

#### 4. REGULATION OF LABOR

*Guilds.*—Partly because of legislation such as the edict of 1597, partly because of the power of traditional forms, and partly because of the nature of the industrial problems of the time, the number of guilds in France increased during the first six decades of the seventeenth century. The growing authority of the crown in matters economic is shown by the fact that the formation of new guilds or the reorganization of old ones was usually under royal auspices.<sup>111</sup>

After Colbert came to power, both these trends were intensified. More guilds were created, and they were almost always formed under royal authorization. One of the objects of the special and general regulations issued through Colbert's influence was to form given segments of industrial workers, manufacturers, or merchants into guilds. The regulation for serge-making in Aumale, dated August 23, 1666, for example, had as its first article the following sentence.

First, since up till now there has been no guild, which has caused confusion and disorder in the goods, no length being observed, a craft guild shall be formed and established under the good pleasure of the king.<sup>112</sup>

Similarly, the first article of the statutes and regulations (1670) for the textile merchants of Orléans pointed out that because they had no guild, they were unable to repress abuses or to maintain high quality in the preparation of goods. To save the trade and reputation of the city, all the textile merchants were to be formed into a guild.<sup>113</sup> Sometimes new guilds were formed under different circumstances, as when, in 1672, Colbert made the workers of the silk-stocking factory at the Château de Madrid into a guild.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>110</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 19-24.

<sup>111</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 161.

<sup>112</sup> Boissonnade, *Essai sur l'organisation du travail en Poitou*, II, 438-39; *Rec. des règ.*, II, 409-10.

<sup>113</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 126-27.

<sup>114</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,787, fols. 262-63.

More spectacular than this steady pressure for the formation of guilds was Colbert's edict of March, 1673. The edict began by referring back to the enactments of 1581 and 1597, which had ordered that all artisans and craftsmen be organized into guilds. But, the edict continued, because this legislation had not been enforced, many workers had remained unorganized. This led to a condition of disorder and to disputes between those in guilds and those not in them. The edict, therefore, commanded that the enactments of 1581 and 1597 be put into effect, and that all merchants, artisans, and craftsmen in all of France be formed into guilds. Statutes were to be granted to the newly formed guilds by the king, in return for a fee. The edict also went on to order the enforcement of an edict of 1659, which had established a guild of barbers-bathers-steam-bathers-wigmakers, as distinct from the barbers-surgeons' guild. The king had long realized, the edict explained, "that the custom of doing the hair, and keeping baths and steam-baths, and the care taken to keep the human body in a state of honorable cleanliness" was "as useful for health as for adornment and propriety."<sup>115</sup>

The motives behind the edict were largely fiscal. It was intended as a way to raise money to meet the expenses of the Dutch war. But the form it took was dictated both by long-standing precedent and by Colbert's desire to organize all artisans and merchants into guilds, so that industry and commerce might be better ordered and better regulated. The expectations as to the financial return from the edict at first ran high. A list dating from March, 1673, shows that it was planned at Paris to create thirty-eight new guilds, including those of merchants of lumber, merchants of firewood, masters of small schools, horse merchants, renters of furnished rooms, sellers of imitation diamonds, plasterers, tripe sellers, and so forth. From the fees for the granting of statutes for these guilds, it was hoped that something over 500,000 *livres* would be secured.<sup>116</sup>

Colbert was anxious that the edict be enforced, for both financial and economic reasons. On February 12, 1674, he sent a circular letter to the intendants, telling them that since the king needed much money for the prosecution of the war, they were to secure the punctual and strict enforcement of the edict. Twelve days later a royal decree, issued on the advice of Colbert, ordered the strict enforcement of the edict for Paris. All through 1674, Colbert was writing to the intendants,

<sup>115</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,791, fols. 294-96; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 91. <sup>116</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 362-63, doc. 170.

urging them to put the edict into effect and to raise the money that was hoped for. He advised the intendant of Riom, however, not to secure the money from small workmen by force. But in a circular letter to the intendants, dated September 12, 1674, pleading the king's need for money, he told them to get the money from the *octrois* of the cities, or, if necessary, from a poll tax. Three days before the end of the year he wrote the intendant at Aix to say that he expected 80,000 *livres* to be raised in Provence, as a result of the edict.<sup>117</sup>

From a financial point of view, the results of the edict were disappointing. Though the collection of the fees was farmed to a certain Thomas Vaucigne, in 1675, the money came in very slowly. Some was actually raised from the fees paid for statutes by newly formed guilds such as those of the dressmakers, or brandy sellers, or fan-makers, of Paris. But much more was secured by permitting various trades, cities, and provinces to buy exemption from the provisions of the edict. In many cases, established guilds were forced to contribute to these payments. The creation of the new barbers' guild eventually brought in nearly 400,000 *livres*, mostly from Paris. The books of the farmer were kept open till 1705. But even at that late date, the receipts resulting from the edict were less than 2,000,000 *livres*.<sup>118</sup>

The results of the edict of 1673 were important, however, in aspects other than the financial ones. Some guilds were created by main force. At Paris, for instance, the trade of lemonade selling was organized into a guild. When no masters offered themselves as members, Colbert appointed a syndic and four wardens for the guild, and ordered the officers of the police to force the lemonade sellers to become masters in the guild, and to pay 150 *livres* each. Or again, the female dressmakers of Paris, who had long struggled for recognition, had been repressed with more or less success by the tailors. After the edict of 1673, a guild of female dressmakers was organized. In authorizing this new group, the king explained that the tailors would not be injured, since the dressmakers were busy working anyhow, and that it was more in keeping with modesty for women and girls to be fitted by persons of their own sex. But the tailors were allowed to retain the exclusive right to make corsets and certain outer garments.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 324-25, 327, 328-29, 330, 350-51, 370, and *passim*; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,791, fols. 324-25.

<sup>118</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1491, "Affaires extraordinaires, compte de traité des arts et métiers et autres traités"; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 363, doc. 171.

<sup>119</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 219-22.

Some stories were circulated about the hardships occasioned by the enforcement of the edict. Mme de Sévigné repeated the tale of a poor embroidery-maker of the faubourg Saint-Marceau, who was unable to pay the fee of 10 *écus* that was charged him. When, to enforce payment, the police officers seized his bed and his porringer, the man cut the throats of three of his children. His wife barely managed to save the fourth. The story was gory, but untrue.<sup>120</sup>

It is impossible entirely to separate the effects of the edict of 1673 from the general tendencies of the time toward an increase in the number of guilds. Many guilds were formed as a result of the general regulations of 1669, as for instance at La Flèche, in 1671, under the influence of the *lieutenant-général* of the *sénéchaussée*. Others were created specially to provide for newly introduced industries, as for example the guild of tanners of Hungary-style leather, formed at Paris in 1675. But the results of the edict, fiscal though it was, were probably not negligible. At Paris, within a few months after the issuance of the edict, the number of guilds rose from 60 to 83, and it increased to 129 before the end of the century. An increase in the number of guilds, from whatever cause, was general in the time of Colbert. The towns, with the number of new guilds in these years, are listed by Boissonnade:<sup>121</sup>

The list is by no means complete, but it serves to show something of the rapid extension of the guild regime under Colbert. Boissonnade

Chartres . . . . .	3	Saint-Lo . . . . .	1
Brou . . . . .	1	Tours . . . . .	8
Illiers . . . . .	1	Le Mans . . . . .	3
Orléans . . . . .	3	Rennes . . . . .	9
Reims . . . . .	3	Poitiers . . . . .	8
Amiens . . . . .	2	Riom . . . . .	1
Soissons . . . . .	2	Aubusson . . . . .	1
Sedan . . . . .	1	Limoges . . . . .	1
Chaumont . . . . .	1	Bordeaux . . . . .	1
Châlons-sur-Marne . . . . .	11	Toulouse . . . . .	5
Colmar . . . . .	1	Carcassonne . . . . .	2
Mutzig . . . . .	1	Montpellier . . . . .	3
Molsheim . . . . .	1	Nîmes . . . . .	4
Saverne . . . . .	1	Lyon . . . . .	8
Rouen . . . . .	4	Nevers . . . . .	5
Aumale . . . . .	2	Dijon . . . . .	12
Elbeuf . . . . .	1		

<sup>120</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, xcii.

<sup>121</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, pp. 551-52; *ibid.*, No. 796, pp. 1389-90; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 221-22; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 246.

states that in Poitou alone the regulations of 1669 led to the formation of guilds for cloth-making or dyeing in 157 cities or towns. Though in many areas, especially rural or isolated ones, "free work" persisted and guilds were never introduced, still by the mid-eighteenth century it was estimated that there were 20,000 guilds in France. Many of these guilds, directly or indirectly, must have owed their origin to Colbert's work.<sup>122</sup>

Though Colbert usually strove to extend the guild system, there were occasions on which he pursued the opposite course. For instance, by a decree of June 10, 1666, it was ordered that to facilitate the manufacture of linens, dimities, and fustians by six entrepreneur-merchants at Le Mans, any weavers presented by them should be accepted as members of the weavers' guild without further formality or expense. The intendant, Voisin de la Noiraye, was asked to look into the situation in the fall of the same year. As a result of his report, a new decree was issued on March 3, 1667. By it, the guild of weavers of Le Mans was formally suppressed without compensation, and the work of weaving thrown open to all comers on an equal basis. Or again, by taking the side of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, Colbert destroyed the authority, the prestige, and the monopoly of the old guild of St. Luke, the painters' guild of Paris.<sup>123</sup>

In most cases, however, Colbert was for extending the guild system. But at the same time he was ever insistent on increasing the authority of the crown over the guilds. Under his guidance, the state took over control of many things that would formerly have been left to the individual guilds or to the local authorities. The new regulations made it theoretically possible for a master in one town to move to another and become a member of the guild there without difficulty or expense. A royal regulation of December 30, 1679, limited the number of goldsmiths to 300. Colbert used his power in his later years to reduce or to limit the number of Protestant masters in various guilds. As in the past, the issuance of royal letters of mastership proved not only a source of income to the crown, but also a method of making the guilds somewhat more accessible to aspiring journeymen.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 247; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 381; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 478.

<sup>123</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 319-21; Colbert, *Lettres*, V, 244; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 300-1.

<sup>124</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, sup. I, 79, and *passim*; "Manuscripts français," No. 21,789, fols. 70-83; Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 125, 131-32, and *passim*; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 478.

More important than these rather exceptional actions of the state was its steadily developing authority over all phases of guild activity. A decree of January, 1675, forbade the formation of any new guild without royal confirmation of its statutes. The royal regulations and their enforcement led to the subjection of the guilds, even in their routine existence, to a variety of royal officials, intendants, inspectors of manufactures, and special commissioners. The older officers of the *parlements* and the feudal subdivisions gradually lost much of their power over the guilds, though the municipal officials retained and extended their authority, as a result of the regulations.

By the end of Colbert's life, the guilds had lost much of their independence. Their statutes were granted or confirmed, and frequently written, by the state. The election and the functioning of wardens and other guild officers was watched over by royal officials. The financial affairs of the guilds were a matter of concern to the state, for in a variety of ways they were coming more and more to be sources of income for the crown. The technical operations of the guild members in their varied crafts were prescribed and supervised by the state. Inspectors of manufactures sat in guild meetings and took part in their decisions.

While the guilds were thus losing their independence, they were tending, as they had for centuries—but now even more rapidly—to become aristocratic and closed corporations. This was especially true of the guilds of merchants, drapers, mercers, goldsmiths, and dyers. Within the guilds themselves, what power was left to them was likely to be more and more concentrated in the hands of a clique of the wealthier members. The tendency was reënforced by the fact that the state was prone to seek its business advisers and its business officials from among the more prominent members of the more important guilds.

In the internal organization of the guilds, the same trends were at work. For a masterpiece, and even for an apprenticeship, the payment of a large fee might be substituted. The cost of becoming a master on any terms had risen, despite all legislation. In some guilds a hierarchy of masters was created, so that there were *maîtres de confrérie*, *simples maîtres*, *jeunes maîtres*, *anciens maîtres*, and so on. In 1680 the guild of *tissutiers-rubaniers* of Paris had 152 masters divided thus into grades: <sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 245-46, 250-52; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 403-8.

Jurés . . . . .	6
Anciens de jurande . . . . .	31
Maîtres de confrérie . . . . .	4
Anciens maîtres de confrérie . . . . .	23
Bâtonnier . . . . .	1
Anciens bâtonniers . . . . .	4
Anciens maîtres . . . . .	25
Modernes . . . . .	23
Jeunes . . . . .	25
Religionnaires . . . . .	10

*Journeymen.*—With the growing aristocratic and exclusive tendencies of the guilds went a further development of an old feature—the effort by the guild masters to use their organization as a method of holding down and repressing journeymen and other laborers. Despite the fact that they had long since been made illegal, associations of journeymen persisted, and even increased in the seventeenth century, as a response to the increasing separation in status between the masters and their laborers. The association of journeymen carpenters of Dijon lasted throughout the century, although it seems to have split in two in 1677. A powerful association of journeymen cloth makers at Darnetal was able to win wage increases by strikes and boycotts, in the years following 1680.

But for the most part the journeymen were kept in a state bordering on subjection, since they were governed by guild, municipal, and national regulations, drawn up if not by the masters, at least for the benefit of the masters. The guild statutes usually forbade a journeyman to work save for a master, or to leave a piece of work unfinished. They provided fines for absence, tardiness, or carelessness. They forbade a master to hire a journeyman unless he had an honorable discharge from his former master, or to try to hire a journeyman who was working for someone else. They frequently announced the right (a bitter one for the journeyman) of all masters to hire workers from out of town. Meetings of journeymen were often forbidden by municipal regulations.<sup>126</sup> In 1665 and 1671 the journeyman printers of Paris were forbidden to meet, or to molest provincial or foreign journeymen coming to work in Paris.<sup>127</sup>

On August 13, 1664, a decree of the Council of State was issued in

<sup>126</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 383–93; *Rec. des règ.*, *passim*.

<sup>127</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 368–69, doc. 182.



the matter of the journeymen of Lyon. It set forth the fact that the manufacture of silk, cloth of gold, and cloth of silver, gave employment to 20,000 persons in that city. But because of the faithlessness of the workers, it was declining there and being transferred to other cities with better regulated labor. The workers in Lyon, according to the decree, stole ceaselessly from their masters, cheated them, sold their materials, and concealed these frauds by greasing the silk and by other devices. The money they secured thus, they used for "drunkenness and debauches." Each *écu* they stole cost the masters 20, by spoiling goods in one way or another. To prevent such abuses, the ordinary courts were not enough. So the decree established a special court, under the authority of the *sénéchal* of Lyon, "to proceed extraordinarily" against the guilty workers. This court was to have the right to inflict, without appeal, penalties up to a fine of 250 *livres*, branding, whipping, the stocks, and all other punishments save the galleys and death. It must have seemed a success, for on July 6, 1665, a similar court for Tours was established by decree.<sup>128</sup>

An example, dating from the very beginning of Colbert's period of power, shows how the guild statutes could be used to repress journeymen. On December 10, 1660, ten master paper-makers of Thiers, in Auvergne, drew up 9 articles as statutes and regulations for their guild. The first provided that the regulations laid down by Henry III in 1582 be enforced, that the paper be of good and honest quality, and that each leaf be marked with its weight and quality. The second exempted the makers from all regulations on types of paper no longer made. The third gave the masters the right to employ such workers, local, out-of-town, or foreign, as they saw fit. No one was to interfere with this right, under penalty of a fine of 50 *livres*. The fourth declared that if "by illicit monopolies and pernicious understandings" the journeymen of Thiers refused to work with outsiders and left their work unfinished and in danger of being ruined, the masters were to help one another by lending such workers as were left, until new ones could be found. To enforce this article, an inspector was to be sent around at general expense to see who had too many workers and who had too few.

The fifth article gave each master the right to take on as many apprentices as he wished, but for each he was to pay 10 *livres* to the guild chapel and 5 *livres* to the journeymen. As soon as an apprentice

<sup>128</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,738, fols. 206, 207.

was capable, he might be put to work on any task, and the journeymen were not to object. The sixth fixed the amount of work a journeyman must do in a day, as observed from time immemorial. The seventh provided that on holidays the journeyman must come to the mill of the master for his dinner at from 10 to 11 A.M. and for his supper at from 5 to 6 P.M. If late, without an adequate excuse, the journeyman was to have no right to expect his master to give him anything to eat. The eighth forbade masters to hire away each other's workers. In hiring a new worker, a master was to communicate with the previous employer, to see if all was as it should be. For violating this provision, a master was to be held to pay 50 *livres* to the previous employer. The ninth article arranged that to enforce these regulations the master paper-makers and merchants, as a body, were to elect each year 2 *bailes*, or *syndics*, who were to take oath to execute the articles. They were to institute the necessary lawsuits, and collect fines in the name of the guild. "And because," concluded this document, "to give greater force and strength to the above regulations, it is necessary to have them confirmed in justice, it is resolved by the whole body of paper-makers that a request will be presented to the king in his Council, and wherever else it shall be necessary, to obtain the aforesaid approval and confirmation of the aforesaid regulations." <sup>129</sup>

The next year the master paper-makers of Thiers requested M. Blich, *président et lieutenant-général de la sénéchaussée* of Auvergne, to confirm the regulations. They explained to him that the old regulations of 1582 had been well enforced, "but the negligence and jealousy of certain persons and the plots and monopolies of the journeymen" had "not only permitted old abuses, but even introduced new ones." They went on to explain that the paper-makers and merchants

who, to live in union and tranquillity with the journeymen, have for a long time pretended, and wished, to ignore the disorders, having seen them go to excess and to a point where they would no longer be able to remedy them if they were neglected further, even to the point where the journeymen, taking advantage of this tolerance, would have wished to establish it as a right that they only should be able to work in Thiers, and to impose this limitation on the petitioners that they should not employ any outside valets or journeymen; and to execute this design contrary to the public liberty, they did plot and agree among themselves to cease and abandon the work and service of their masters when the latter should wish to employ in the manu-

<sup>129</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,739, fols. 34-35.

facture of paper any outside journeymen; and for this purpose having agreed upon a watchword, which is among them "*faire la garde*"; so it is that recently they abandoned the mills where they worked, left a lot of paper in an unfinished state, which by this cessation was ruined, and caused a notable damage and harm to all the merchants and master paper-makers; and, not content with that, they threatened the petitioners and did their utmost to arouse troubles and riots among the people, thus obliging the petitioners to complain about the matter to the *sieur Chastellain* of Thiers, who by his ordinance here attached granted them an act and order that by their diligence and at the request of the *procureur d'office* he should be informed about the matter, and in the meantime he permitted the petitioners to make use of such valets and journeymen as they saw fit, whether from out of town or others, with prohibitions to the journeymen of the aforesaid town against hindering this in any way, under penalty of being proceeded against extraordinarily; as a result of which ordinance, the petitioners had information and decrees lodged against the aforesaid journeymen, who since then have not ceased their monopolies, and have beaten and badly treated outside workers who came to the aforesaid town, about which complaints were likewise made to the aforesaid *sieur Chastellain*. The petitioners, seeing that they could remedy such great disorders only by new statutes and regulations, several times assembled to deliberate among themselves and to think of means of restoring their art and craft to its old-time order, which ought to be observed; and after each of the aforesaid masters had set forth the difficulties and inconveniences that they [*sic*] could foresee, they all agreed unanimously upon the Statutes and Regulations here attached, for the authorization and confirmation of which they have recourse to you, Monsieur, hoping that it may please you, and that what is set forth above, together with what will appear to you from the pieces hereto attached, will make you willing to confirm and authorize the aforesaid Statutes and Regulations, forbid both masters and journeymen to contravene them under penalty of a fine of 1,000 *livres*, and for the enforcement of your ordinance direct and enjoin the aforesaid *sieur Chastellain* of Thiers to see to it, and to proceed against those who contravene them, according to the rigor of the laws and ordinances.<sup>180</sup>

On July 5, 1661, M. Blich decided to ask advice of the judges-consuls and merchants, and of the royal *procureur*, on this amazingly modern industrial dispute, or fight for the closed shop. The former gave their opinion on August 31, 1661, saying that they saw no reason why the articles should not be confirmed and "on the contrary found them useful and advantageous to the body of this craft and to the public." The *procureur* insisted that the matter should be laid before the king, but

<sup>180</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 16,739, fols. 35-36.

that meanwhile the new regulations should be enforced. On September 6, 1661, Blich ordered that the regulations should be taken before the king, but that meanwhile they should be enforced "to prevent the continuation of the abuses and disorders and to advance the trade and commerce of the petitioners and the public tranquillity."<sup>181</sup>

*Regulations for workers.*—In a similar fashion, regulations were drawn up in order to repress the workers in privileged manufactures. James Fournier, proprietor of the manufacture of silk stockings on looms at Lyon, in 1667 was having trouble with his workers. Some of them were not "always as well-intentioned" as they should have been, and they caused "arguments and contention" in the house of sieur Fournier, and "disorders and discussions among his workers and apprentices." Fournier therefore complained to the *lieutenant-criminel* of the city and *sénéchaussée*. But the troubles continued. Fournier declared that his workers so lacked assiduity that they did only half the work they should have. He therefore appealed to the *prévôt des marchands* and the *échevins* of the city. They looked into the matter, examined Fournier and his workers, and after some deliberation drew up a regulation, in eleven articles, to remedy the troubles.

The first article required the workers to confess themselves and take communion on Easter, Pentecost, All Saints' Day, Christmas, and the four holy days of the Virgin. By the second, they were ordered to pray morning and evening in a place to be set aside by Fournier. The third decreed that they should get up at four o'clock in the morning and work till eight o'clock in the evening, from Easter to St. Michael's day; while from St. Michael's day to Easter, they were to get up at 6 A. M. and work until 10 P. M. They were not to be absent from work without securing leave from sieur Fournier, or his wife, or his son. By the fourth article, the workers were allowed three-quarters of an hour for dinner and for supper, and one-half hour for breakfast and the same for lunch.

The workers were forbidden by the fifth article to swear, blaspheme, or sing "dishonorable" songs, to insult one another or to fight, or to smoke tobacco. In case of disputes between them, Fournier was to act as arbitrator. The workers were also forbidden, by the sixth article, to leave the house of sieur Fournier, or to sleep away from it, without permission. On Sundays and holidays they were to return to it by 9 P. M.

<sup>181</sup> See footnote 130 above.

at the latest. The seventh article required the workers to clean the looms each week. The work rooms were to be swept and cleaned by the two last comers. The four last apprentices hired were to be held to sweep each week the steps, court, and house of sieur Fournier, and to clean the ceilings and windows, and to do other services about the house and workrooms as their master might require. When a worker needed silk or other material, the eighth article declared, he should ask for it aloud. They were to make all articles of the sizes ordered by Fournier. They were to make every effort to see that their work was perfect and to use to advantage the silk given them, and not to soil the products.

Each worker, the ninth article provided, was to mark the stockings he made, so that any defects could be brought home to the person responsible. After nine months' apprenticeship, each worker was to be held to make three pairs of stockings each week, or two pairs of full-fashioned stockings. Each worker was to turn over his week's stint to Fournier on Saturday night. After his apprenticeship was over, any worker failing to do his full week's work was to be fined 3 *livres* for each pair by which he fell short. The tenth article forbade the workers to draw or make marks on the walls or ceilings of Fournier's buildings. The eleventh article extended the regulations to the workers preparing the silk or the finished stockings, or working at the forge of sieur Fournier. The *prévôt des marchands* and the *échevins* asked that the regulations be ratified by the king and by *parlement*.<sup>132</sup>

The interest in the morals of the workers displayed in these regulations was typical of the times, though part of it at least was based on utilitarian motives. It was reported to Colbert in 1669, for example, that one of the causes of trouble at a ribbon factory at Chevreuse was the drunkenness of the workers. He straightway wrote the bailiff of the town, ordering him to forbid tavern keepers to sell anything to drink to the workers during working hours (except for one hour at dinner time). The fine for infraction was to be 10 *livres*, and the order was to be strictly enforced.<sup>133</sup>

More significant were the regulations drawn up for the royal manufacture of silk, cloth of gold, and cloth of silver, located at Saint-Maur-des-Fosses, on the outskirts of Paris. This regulation is probably fairly typical of those in other *manufactures royales*, copies of which

<sup>132</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 365-67, doc. 177; Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 388.

<sup>133</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, cxliv; II<sup>2</sup>, 490.

have not survived. These regulations consisted of thirty-three articles and were printed in the form of a large poster. The articles may be summarized thus:

1. All workers before starting their labor in the morning were to wash their hands, "and then standing before their looms shall offer their work to God that He in His Divine Goodness may bless it," and each was to make the sign of the cross and then commence to work.

2. The *tireurs* were to take turns in providing each shop or booth with clean water and towels.

3. The *tireurs* were to show honor and respect to all masters and weavers, to receive their orders civilly, and not to start work till ordered to do so.

4. *Tireurs* were to sweep their booths and the courtyards and common places four times a week, under penalty of a fine of 5 *sous*.

5. Like the masters and weavers, the *tireurs* were to have one hour for dinner and one for supper.

6. No work was to be done in the morning by artificial light. But all workers were to be on hand at the break of day, so as to be ready to begin as soon as there was enough light. *Tireurs* were to come one-quarter hour before the masters, so as to have everything ready to begin, under penalty of a 5 *sous* fine.

7. In the evenings, work by artificial light was to begin on Lady Day (September 8) and to continue until the Thursday before Easter. Such work was to last each evening until 10 P. M.

8. During the winter a master and a weaver were to be appointed to provide the coal supply for heating. They were to be paid each week by the other masters and weavers. *Tireurs* were to pay nothing.

9. Breakfast was to be the only meal to be eaten in the work booths. For it, there was to be no meat or anything else which might make the work greasy.

10. The time allowed for breakfast was to be one-half hour, and for dinner and supper one hour each. At the return from meals and during the work periods, there were to be "no discourses made of stories or adventures, or other conversations which distract workers from their work."

11. "None shall swear (which is displeasing to God) nor blaspheme the holy name of God, nor talk irreverently of holy things nor of the mysteries of religion, nor likewise shall any utter dirty and unseemly words, under penalty of 6 *livres* fine."

12. "None shall speak ill or make sport, by words or otherwise, of any person employed in this manufacture, under penalty of a fine of 3 *livres*."

13. No one was to threaten or quarrel with any other worker, or to give a nickname to anyone, under penalty of a fine of 3 *livres*.

14. No one was to strike another worker, under penalty of being struck in return by the injured party or by a person appointed by him, and of

paying a 6 *livres*' fine. If the offense was serious, the matter was to be taken before the local judge.

15. No one was to "play" or take walks about the workshops. Each was to stay at his work.

16. Masters and weavers were not to go into any shops but their own, nor were they to bring any outsiders into the shops, under penalty of being punished as "spys and folk of ill-will" and paying a fine of 10 *livres*.

17. In each house of the manufacture there was to be an agent to supply each worker with needed materials. He was to be summoned, when needed, by a bell.

18. Each worker was to see in the evening what he would need for the next day, and to ask the agent for it.

19. Each weaver was to keep a small locked drawer for his gold, silver, and tools, and he was to be responsible for them.

20. "While one is working, songs, psalms, and canticles shall not be sung out loud; but in a manner and in a tone of voice so low that the worker next to him who is singing shall not be able to hear nor to be interrupted by it."

21. All employees were to report for work on all work days except only Shrove Monday and Tuesday, the morning of Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, St. Roch's Day, and St. Nicholas Day—St. Nicholas being the patron saint of the parish of Saint-Maur. On Sundays and *fête* days employees were to be present at divine service and were then "to spend the rest of the day in diverting themselves honorably." They were to "retire to their lodgings at nine or ten o'clock at the latest." If a weaver missed a day of work, or even a half day, he was to pay a fine of 3 *livres*, and 15 *sous* to each of his two *lireurs*.

22. "It is forbidden to pay any *bienvenue*, *premier ployage*, *pied remué*, and other things of a similar quality, and to go to escort departing workers, as these things make only for a waste of time and of the money of those who make these payments, and produce only debauches." For violation of this rule, the fine was to be 3 *livres*.

23. No worker was to talk about what was being made, nor to discuss the methods and secrets of the manufacture.

24. Under penalty of being prosecuted as "domestic thieves," all workers were forbidden to take any of the waste or broken bits of gold, silver, or thread, or anything else. These things were to be turned over to the agent who gave out the gold and silver.

25. Under the same penalty, workers were forbidden to take home or borrow any tools or articles belonging to the manufacture.

26. Specifically, the workers were forbidden to take any cards, counter-weights, hammers, or other little tools, under penalty of a fine of 20 *livres*, if the article was worth less than 3 *livres*. If it was worth more than 3 *livres*, the penalty was to be the same as in articles 24 and 25.

27. If any employee had tools of his own, he was to make a list of them and declare them before starting work at the manufacture. Otherwise he was to be prosecuted as a thief for taking away any tools whatever.

28. Any employee wishing to cease to work for the manufacture must finish the piece of work he was doing.

29. Each day at midday a bell was to be rung, to indicate the dinner hour, and another bell was to be rung for supper at 6 P. M.

30. All employees were to pay their board and rent, to those with whom they lodged, every Saturday. If they failed to do so, their belongings might be seized.

31. The present regulations were to be read and re-read to all employees when they were hired, and were to be printed and posted in each shop.

32. Any employee failing to obey the regulations was to be discharged without hope of being rehired.

33. All fines were to be paid to the *Hôpital de la charité* at Charenton.<sup>184</sup>

Regulations not dissimilar to those for the factory at Saint-Maur seem to have been in force at the Royal Manufacture of Mirrors. But here most of the workers were hired at first as apprentices for fairly long terms, and were subjected to indentures of apprenticeship, by which they agreed to abide by certain rules. Strictly speaking, they were more like hired workers than apprentices, since they were paid for their labor. But relegating them to the status of apprentices afforded an easy and convenient method of regulating their work and their lives.<sup>185</sup>

Though most of the regulations served to benefit the employers rather than the employees, and though it was with the employer class that Colbert had most of his dealings, still he was not unconscious of the other side of the medal. In 1674, for example, in writing to the intendant Bouchu, Colbert declared himself in favor of a variety of manufacturing establishments for Auxerre. "These manufactures," he wrote, "will perhaps force the masters to give something more to the workers, and will produce at least this advantage, that the masters of a single manufacture do not dominate the workers and give them only what they see fit."<sup>186</sup>

One phase of the regulation of industry distressed Colbert a great deal. As the guild organization was extended, the old-time disputes between guilds were perpetuated and sometimes even aggravated. In fighting for control over some phase of business, a guild would waste its

<sup>184</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 21,787, fol. 40.

<sup>185</sup> Frémy, *Histoire de la manufacture royale des glaces*. pp. 286 ff., 314-15.

<sup>186</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 688-89.



substance and burden its members by endless lawsuits. In November, 1680, he wrote to the intendant Breteuil to say that the dispute between the *houpiers* and the *baracaniers* of Abbeville must be ended, since such quarrels impaired commerce and wasted the time of the workers. Earlier in the same year, Mareschal, inspector of manufactures, reported to Colbert that the squabbles and lawsuits among the mercers, drapers, and hosiers of Châlons had so interrupted trade that goods could not be sold.<sup>137</sup>

Again and again the royal government intervened to settle such disputes, by a decree that overrode court decisions and cut through technicalities. Such a decree on April 8, 1666, settled the quarrel between the manufacturers of the Place Royale on the one hand and the *tisutiers* and *rubanniers* of Paris on the other.<sup>138</sup> On Colbert's advice, another decree was issued on September 29, 1670, permitting drapers, serge-makers, and linen weavers all to make druggets, linsey-woolsey, and other fabrics of wool and hemp or linen.<sup>139</sup> Another decree, of August 3, 1671, forbade any but dyers of *petit teint* to dye linen or wool thread black.<sup>140</sup>

Despite such decrees, and the efforts of Colbert, the guild disputes continued through the seventeenth century. The secondhand clothes dealers and the tailors persisted in their fight, which dated back to the early fifteenth century. The pork-butchers and bakers entered into a 35-year quarrel (1667-1701) with the cabaret keepers who sold bread and bacon. The goldsmiths entered complaints against the mercers, jewelry-makers, clock-makers, engravers, founders, and sword-cutters. On January 20, 1676, the master apothecaries, having lost a lawsuit, assembled to deliberate on the unjust decision which permitted two women, named la Denis and la Maurice, to give clysters. At Châlons the *tonneliers* appropriated 500 *livres* in 1678, and 3,700 *livres* in 1680 to uphold their lawsuits. Even the women entered into the spirit of things, and at the end of the century the female flower-sellers of Paris were complaining that the female bouquet-sellers were encroaching on their rights.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>137</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, pp. 842-43; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 223, letter from Mareschal to Colbert, July 9, 1680.

<sup>138</sup> "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 207, fols. 279-82; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,739, fols. 42-44.

<sup>139</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 303-4.

<sup>140</sup> *Rec. des règ.*, I, 398.

<sup>141</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 413, 223; Boislisle, *Correspondance des contrôleurs-généraux*, I, 497.

*Summary.*—On the whole Colbert, though he strengthened the guild regime in some ways, allowed it to grow weaker in others. He did little to remedy its abuses. His work probably tended to accentuate the steadily growing gap between the master and the journeyman, the capitalist and the laborer. Most important of all, the attempts he made to raise money from the organization and reorganization of the guilds, and his extension of government control to every phase of guild activity, lessened the independence of these bodies and made of them before the century was out congealing monopolies which the state tolerated, because revenue could be raised from them.

# XIII

## INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

SINCE many of the problems that faced Colbert and many aspects of his economic work do not fall into the categories treated in the earlier chapters—commerce, colonies, companies, manufacturing, the regulation of industry—it is necessary to devote a chapter to a rather miscellaneous assortment of topics, linked together chiefly by the fact that they all had to do with the internal development of France. Under this heading will be discussed Colbert's efforts in regard to mines, land reclamation, conservation, population, the poor, the establishment of *hôpitaux généraux*, some aspects of bullionism, the question of luxury, and agriculture in various of its phases. None of these matters seemed to him as significant as the great fields of commerce and industry, but, taken together, they bulked large in his thinking and in his work. All of them seemed to him worthy of attention, and, if properly developed, capable of doing much for the wealth and prosperity of the country.

### I. MINES

To Colbert the mineral resources of France were of importance from several points of view. Like earlier mercantilists, he was not convinced that important deposits of gold and silver, which would give France a direct supply of the precious metals, might not be discovered. He was anxious to find and to develop mines, so as to reduce the amount of mineral products that France had to import from other countries. He realized that metals of various sorts were a prerequisite for many industries. And he was anxious to exploit any resource that might bring wealth to a district or to France in general.

Nothing could be of "greater consequence than the search for mines," wrote Colbert to the intendant of Grenoble in 1679, since if enough could be found, they "would keep in the kingdom more than 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 *livres*" which went out each year "to get these materials from foreign lands."<sup>1</sup> When he received reports of the suc-

<sup>1</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 480; cf. also 436, and II, cclxii; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 281.

cessful opening of some copper mines, Colbert wrote to the engineer in charge, "you may imagine with what impatience I await the confirmation by your letters of such good news."<sup>2</sup> Colbert's interest in mines is symbolized by the fact that in 1670 he secured for himself by purchase the office of Grand Master, Superintendent General, and Reformer of Mines.<sup>3</sup>

To encourage the search for mines, Colbert had an English work on mineralogy, by W. Plattes, translated and published, and he secured the publication of a work on French mines by César d'Arcons, a nephew of Olivier de Serres. He urged the intendants to encourage the hunt for mines. Arrangements were made in 1670 to pay bounties to those who discovered mineral deposits, and sums ranging from 220 *livres* to 20,000 *livres* were actually paid over. Colbert personally sent out prospecting expeditions into various parts of the country.<sup>4</sup>

In general, Colbert upheld the old theory that the state was the proprietor of all mineral deposits, and that private individuals were to exploit mines only under some sort of license to be granted by the state, although in practice special concessions were frequently granted to the owners of the land, and even the basic theory was often ignored. To encourage the search for and exploitation of mines, wide privileges, similar to those given industrial establishments, were often granted. For example, a privilege dated April 19, 1662, gave sieur Liscouet the exclusive right to open and develop certain lead mines in the parish of Carnot, in the bishopric of Cornouailles, in Brittany. He was, however, to be held to recompense the proprietors of the land, and to pay over one-tenth of the product of the mines to the king. In February, 1664, letters patent granted Pierre Formont, banker of Paris, the right to search for and exploit marble quarries in Languedoc, on the lands of the king or of private persons. But he was to indemnify the latter. A similar privilege was granted him for the Pyrenees area on June 13, 1670. A privilege was granted, in 1670, to Jean-Jacques Jaer, a native of Liège, to discover and develop coal mines. He was to have the exclusive right to do so for twelve years, within four leagues of the town of Rethel. Naturalization and exemption from the *taille* and all other taxes was granted to him, to his family, and to his workers. But he, too, was to indemnify the proprietors of the land. Sometimes the priv-

<sup>2</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 424; cf. also 437.

<sup>3</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 135; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 175.

ileges were even more extensive. Daniel Grysolon, a merchant of Lyon, for instance, having undertaken the exploitation of the coal mines of Vivarais, was given the monopoly of the sale of coal in Vivarais, Forez, and Lyonnais, to enable him to reduce the importation of English and Flemish coal. But the opposition of the local coal miners and merchants was such that the privilege was revoked.<sup>5</sup>

Both for prospecting and for working mines Colbert had recourse to foreign technicians, much as he did for industrial enterprises. He brought in Swedish, Flemish, and German miners and engineers at state expense and frequently paid their salaries, once they were in France. The Swede, Besche, for example, with twelve of his workmen, received 13,000 *livres* from the state for his labors in Languedoc. Colbert even felt that misappropriation of money by Besche was an abuse "not worthy of consideration," so long as he was able to discover mines. To help the lead mines of that region, Colbert also arranged to send thither miners from Alsace. Further to aid some of the mining enterprises, Colbert granted them the right to cut wood in the royal forests.<sup>6</sup>

One of the large-scale efforts started through Colbert's influence for the development of mineral wealth, was the organization of the *Compagnie royale des mines et fonderies du Languedoc*. Basing his hopes on rosy reports as to the lead and copper resources of Languedoc, made by competent engineers, Colbert in 1666 arranged for the formation of this company. By December, 1668, it numbered sixteen members, including several prominent financiers.<sup>7</sup> An engineer, named Chenier, was sent to Germany to study mining methods there; German miners were imported; large sums of money were expended; storehouses were prepared for the minerals. The effort by the company to discover mines and to work them was prolonged and persistent. Some idea of its extent may be obtained from a *mémoire* of 1669, which lists the various places where deposits had been found, and comments on each. It may be summarized thus:

La Borde del Roy: a variable and uncertain mine. M. Besche is having it investigated further.

<sup>5</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 135 ff., 319-20; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 595-96, 603.

<sup>6</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 137-38; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 803, 805; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 452; IV, 426-27.

<sup>7</sup> A contemporary list gives their names as de Saint André, de la Croix, de Courcelles, Dalibert, de Penaultier, de Montbel, de Sonnyng, Le Secq, Sollu, Bachelier, Debilly, Bauyn, de Cherville, Ricquet, Des Allus (?), Bries.

Gincla: an uncertain copper mine. A foundry and two furnaces have been established. M. Besche is going to see if it can be kept up.

Moisset: a poor copper mine. From July 1, 1666, to December 31, 1668, it produced 1,760 pounds. In that period it cost 15,695 *livres*, 13 *sous*.

Culz: an abundant lead mine but hard to work. Besche left two miners and a Swedish founder there, to show the workers how to do things better. From August 1, 1666, to December 31, 1668, it produced 25,719 pounds. For this period the expenses were 13,378 *livres*.

Mines des Barthes: a lead mine fairly easy to work. No foundry has been set up.

Brossac: a fairly good lead mine. There are hopes that the output can be increased.

Corbières, Davejan: rather abundant lead mines. Expenses from July 1, 1666, to December 31, 1668, were 4,262 *livres*, 8 *sous*. The mines are difficult to work. No wood is available. M. Bachelier has stopped work there.

Lanet: a poor copper mine. M. Besche will visit it. It has produced less than 8,000 pounds. The expense has been 772 *livres*.

Dauriac: a poor copper mine. M. Besche is to visit it. It has produced only a few hundredweight and has cost 1,036 *livres*.

La Bauvre: a copper mine, outlook poor. Work has been stopped. Expenditures, 616 *livres*.

Couis: no product yet; expenditures, 246 *livres*. M. Besche is to visit it.

Fourques: copper mine, to be visited. Expenditures, 95 *livres*.

Lallerac: copper and some lead. Very poor. No hope for it. To be abandoned. Expenditures, 719 *livres*.

Policarps: work stopped, not much hope. 250 *livres* spent.

Bains: lead. It has produced 5 or 6 hundredweight. Work has been stopped, so the Germans could go to the copper mines. Expenditures, 4,483 *livres*.

Largentière: lead. It had good prospects at first, but the vein has been lost; so work has been stopped till the Germans arrive. Expenditures, 3,122 *livres*.

Rouergue and Foix: 8 or 9 copper mines. Some look good. Besche and Bachelier are visiting them and will report.<sup>8</sup>

In April, 1669, Colbert received an optimistic report from Pennautier, one of the members of the company. He wrote that intelligent French miners had been chosen to work with the imported German ones, and that they were learning fast. A lead mine that a few months before had been producing only 150 pounds a day, at a loss, had raised its production to 300 pounds a day.<sup>9</sup> But despite such gleams of hope, the company was doomed to failure. As early as October, 1668, the

<sup>8</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 791, fols. 190-281; for the members of the company, see fol. 281; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 139; Boissonnade, *Colbert, son système et les entreprises industrielles d'état en Languedoc, 1661-1683*, pp. 27-32.

<sup>9</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 805.

workers at Cals, their wages long overdue, were in open revolt, and a subordinate agent was writing Colbert in bitter criticism of Bachelier.<sup>10</sup> Though the company spent some 50,000 *livres* on developing the mines, its efforts all came to nought, probably because of the poor character of the ore deposits; and in 1670-71 the affair was liquidated, the mines closed down, and the workers dismissed.<sup>11</sup>

The Languedoc mining company was only the most elaborate of Colbert's effort to develop the mineral wealth of France. Similar attempts on a smaller scale were organized in Lower Navarre, Guyenne, Périgord, and Dauphiné, with no greater success. Attempts to open up tin mines in Brittany and Gévaudan likewise met with failure. Iron mines, on the contrary, were worked with increasing vigor and success, and legislation, aimed to aid the entrepreneurs in this field, was enacted. For example, an ordinance of 1680 required proprietors of land to permit the exploitation of iron mines, in return for a very small fee on each ton of ore. Similarly, production of coal was increased, in spite of the grant of monopolistic coal-mining privileges to noble landowners who were ill-equipped to take advantage of them. Behind a tariff levied in 1664 and increased in 1667, the output of coal grew to considerable proportions in some regions.

Closely allied not only to his interest in mines but also to his connection with the royal buildings were Colbert's efforts to increase and improve the production of building stone and marble. Searches for proper stone were conducted. The members of the Academy of Architecture were sent to inspect quarries. Royal orders were showered upon entrepreneurs. A company to exploit the marble of the Pyrenees was formed, under Colbert's influence, by the banker Formont. Dowered with an exclusive thirty-year privilege, it met with some success, as did the direct production of marble by the state in Bourbonnais and Barbançon, while a number of smaller enterprises competed among themselves and with Italy in supplying marble for the building program of Louis XIV.

Salt, not only as part of the mineral wealth of France, but also as a means of taxation, had a double importance to Colbert. He strove to increase the production of the salt works of Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche Comté, which had come into the possession of the state

<sup>10</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 791, fol. 197.

<sup>11</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 139; Boissonnade, *Colbert, son système*, pp. 31-32.

through conquest. At first they were farmed out to individual entrepreneurs, but later they were attached to the *ferme générale*. The government paid for the upkeep of the buildings and provided the large quantities of wood employed.<sup>12</sup> On the whole, though Colbert met with many disappointments in this work, his efforts to discover and develop the mineral wealth of the country were of more than passing importance.

## 2. POPULATION

To man the mines, to work in the industries, to cultivate the fields, to produce wealth for France, a large population seemed essential to Colbert. There was a good deal of doubt as to how many people there were in France, for contemporary estimates ranged from 5,000,000 to 48,000,000. But to Colbert, and to most mercantilists, a large and increasing population was one of the most vital points of public policy, even though the lack of statistics made it difficult to determine what the number of people was and whether it was growing. If there were more people, there would be more manufactures, fewer famines, and a more favorable balance of trade, for if properly employed, they would produce more than they consumed.<sup>13</sup>

One method of increasing the population was to prevent the emigration of Frenchmen to other countries. At all times Colbert was anxious to prevent the departure from France not only of skilled artisans and sailors, but of any Frenchmen. An edict of August, 1669, will serve to illustrate his policy. It forbade all Frenchmen to take service, or to settle abroad, under penalty of death and the confiscation of their property. The preamble of the edict stressed the view that it was the patriotic duty of a Frenchman to remain in France. It read: <sup>14</sup>

Although the bonds of birth which attach the native subjects to their sovereigns and to their homelands are the firmest and the most indissoluble of civil society, although the obligation of service that each individual owes to his king and country is profoundly engraved in the heart of even the most poorly regulated nation, and is universally recognized as the first and most indispensable duty of men; nevertheless we have been informed that during the license of recent times numerous of our subjects, forgetting what they owe to their birth, have passed into foreign lands, work there

<sup>12</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 139-47; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, pp. 186-87.

<sup>13</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, pp. 237-38. There were probably somewhat less than 20,000,000 people in France at the end of the century.

<sup>14</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVII, 366-67.



at all things of which they are capable, even the construction of vessels, make their dwellings abroad without plan to return, and establish themselves there by marriages and by acquiring property of all sorts.

Sometimes Colbert turned his attention to indirect methods of increasing the population. He believed that the establishment of manufactures was a good way to bring about a rise in the number of inhabitants. On November 21, 1670, for example, he wrote to the intendant of Orléans, urging him to assist the establishment of stocking making at Dourdan, "there being nothing which helps so much to increase the people in a district as different ways of earning a living."<sup>15</sup>

But more direct methods to attain his end also found favor with Colbert. In 1665 and 1666 he turned his attention to the encouragement of early marriages and large families. He noted that the existing practice discouraged marriage among the lower classes, for while an unmarried youth paid no *taille*, he was made subject to that tax as soon as he took a wife. To remedy this situation and to encourage both upper and lower classes to marry and have children, Colbert prepared an edict which was issued in November, 1666. The preamble stated the grounds for such legislation. It read:

Although marriages are the fecund springs whence the strength and greatness of states are derived, and although the laws, both holy and profane, have equally united to honor fertility and to assist it by their favors, nevertheless, we have found that through the license of the times these privileges have been rendered null and marriages have been deprived of dignity.

The edict therefore provided that all persons subject to the *taille* were to be exempt from it and from other taxes until they were twenty-five years of age, if they married before they were twenty; and until they were twenty-four, if they married in their twenty-first year. Every father of ten living children (not counting among these priests, nuns, or monks, but counting as living sons who had died in the army) was to be exempt from the *taille* and other taxes. Every father of twelve children, alive or dead, was to benefit by a similar exemption. Every noble having ten living children (not counting ecclesiastics, but counting dead soldiers) was to receive a pension of 1,000 *livres* a year. Every noble who was the father of twelve children, living or dead (not counting those in the church), was to receive a pension of 2,000 *livres* a year. Bourgeois, living in free towns not subject to the *taille*, were to receive

<sup>15</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 584.

half the pensions granted to nobles. Provisions designed to eliminate all fraud were added.<sup>16</sup>

The force of the edict was somewhat impaired by the *Cour des aides*, which interpreted it to mean that a single man under twenty-five years old, living with his parents, was not to be subject to the *taille*. In March, 1669, Colbert implemented the edict by a further decree. It had been found that the creditors of certain gentlemen with large families waited until the pensions were paid and then seized them by judicial process. The decree therefore declared that the pensions were not to be subject to judicial seizure under any circumstances. In the *pays d'états* it seems that the pensions were to be paid by the provinces, for on December 3, 1672, Colbert wrote to an official of the Estates of Burgundy and complained that the pensions had not been paid by that body.<sup>17</sup>

The success of the edict was jeopardized from the start by bad administration. Officials kept allowing pensions or exemptions to parents who were not entitled to them under the terms of the grant, either because some of the children were dead, or had devoted themselves to religion. On October 30, 1681, Colbert wrote to an intendant to explain that pensions and privileges should cease when one of the children died, unless there was clear proof that he died in the army. Such were the frauds and abuses perpetrated under the edict that finally in January, 1683, Colbert felt constrained to secure its revocation.<sup>18</sup>

Colbert's insistence in the edict of November, 1666, that monks, priests, and nuns should not be counted as living children brings up another aspect of his work in regard to population. He was anxious not only to increase the numbers, but to increase the proportion of the people engaged in what he regarded as productive and worthy employment. A *mémoire* drawn up for the king by Colbert on October 22, 1664, brings out his attitude clearly. He insisted that all professions and callings should be reduced to those that were useful for great purposes. These were "agriculture, trade, war on land, and that on sea." Colbert continued thus:

If Your Majesty could succeed in reducing all his people to these four sorts of professions, one can say that he could be the master of the world,

<sup>16</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 68-69; VI, 12-14; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVII, 90-93.

<sup>17</sup> Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 393; "Collection Clairambault," No. 446, fol. 165; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 670.

<sup>18</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 465, fol. 223; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 394.

working at the same time to decrease gently and insensibly the number of religious of both sexes, since they produce only folk useless in this world, and very often devils in the next.<sup>19</sup>

The two professions of justice (law) and finance employed, according to Colbert, more than 100,000 of the king's subjects, "without aiding his glory." Finance employed 30,000 or more, but that "monster" had already been dealt with by the king. Justice occupied more than 70,000 subjects and imposed "a heavy and tyrannous yoke, under the authority of your name, on all the rest of your subjects." It kept 1,000,000 persons busy with fraud, and distracted as many more from useful pursuits. If all these persons could be employed in productive professions, it would greatly increase the glory of the king. But this end was not to be attained in a year or two. It might take ten or fifteen or twenty years. A first step would be to permit no one below the legal age to hold judicial office.<sup>20</sup>

While Colbert worked, without great success, to reduce the number of officials, judges, and lawyers, he also devoted much attention to the question of monks, nuns, and priests. From his point of view, it was a serious problem, for it has been estimated that there were somewhat more than 250,000 persons in these categories in the France of his day. In September, 1665, Colbert was considering the question of making the taking of religious vows more difficult, and wondering whether the age for entering upon them could be raised to twenty-five. He was also speculating as to whether the dowries of nuns could be reduced and the taking of novices into convents limited. He thought, too, that if the giving of dowries, in general, could be regulated so that parents would be satisfied with such dowries as they could afford, fewer girls would become nuns, since frequently a father sent his daughter to a convent because he did not feel able to provide her with what he considered an adequate dowry. If dowries could only be fixed by a uniform scale, there would be no invidious comparisons.<sup>21</sup>

In December, 1666, Colbert secured the issuance of an edict forbidding the foundation of any further religious communities without royal permission, with the avowed object of reducing the number of such

<sup>19</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 3. Clément took this letter from a printed source and was unable to find the original. He doubts the authenticity of the words after the last "and." I am inclined to agree with him, for though it is possible that Colbert may have felt that way, it is most improbable that he would have expressed his thought thus to the king.

<sup>20</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, lvii, 12-14.

foundations. In addition, those founded within the last thirty years, without royal letters patent, were to be suppressed. While one of the motives behind the edict was probably to prevent an increase in the number of monks and nuns, it was designed also to prevent the withdrawal of land from taxation. A further motive may lie in the fact that a large number of religious communities were in financial difficulties, arising in some cases from inadequate endowments at their foundation.<sup>22</sup>

In line with Colbert's policy of increasing the productivity of the population was the reduction in the number of holy days to be observed. This reduction was effected in 1666 by letters from the king and an ordinance of Hardouin de Pérefide, archbishop of Paris, on the grounds that the great number of holy days gave workers occasion to squander their substance and made it necessary for one working day to support them through several holy days. Seventeen of the holy days were no longer to be observed by a cessation of work. As a result, only twenty-four holy days, in addition to Sundays, were left to be celebrated in idleness.<sup>23</sup>

*Disease and medicine.*—Because of his interest in a large and productive population, as well as for other reasons both humane and economic, it was natural that Colbert should be interested in the plague that ravaged France in the years following 1666. In August, 1666, Colbert was receiving reports from his agent, Nacquart, telling him that 483 persons had died at Dunkirk and that 96 houses were infected at Gravelines. By December the number of dead at Dunkirk had risen to 884, and at Gravelines to 413. Less than one-third of the people stricken with the plague had recovered. From the Channel coast the plague spread gradually over northern France, and there were serious outbreaks in 1667 and 1668.<sup>24</sup>

During these plague years a certain Augustinian monk, Père Léon de Saint-Marguerite, was sent out by royal authority to help to combat the plague. He seems to have won attention first by his work at Toulon. But he was later employed at Calais, Dunkirk, Lille, Oudenarde, Arras,

<sup>22</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, pp. 239-40; Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 394; Louis XIV, *Mémoires pour l'instruction du dauphin*, II, 297.

<sup>23</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 433-35; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 368, doc. 180; Louis XIV, *Mémoires pour l'instruction du dauphin*, I, 205-6; II, 155; cf. also Neymarck, *Colbert et son temps*, I, 395-401.

<sup>24</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 139, fols. 356, 376-77; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 142 bis, fols. 660-71; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 149, fol. 246.

and other places. He was particularly famous for what was called his *parfum*, with which he fumigated people, houses, and baggage. He had also certain other remedies, which he was said to have employed with good effect. For his services the king rewarded him, on October 31, 1669, with a pension of 600 *livres* a year.<sup>25</sup>

In 1668, when the plague invaded the great cities of northern France, Colbert was torn between a desire to check the spread of the disease and his wish to prevent any interruption of commerce and industry. He delayed the publication of a decree shutting off trade between Amiens and Paris, although the plague was bad in the former city, lest 7,000 or 8,000 people be thrown out of work there. He ordered that Soissons be isolated, to prevent the spread of the disease, but as soon as the plague showed signs of slackening, he permitted the resumption of trade. When communications with Reims were shut off, its inhabitants claimed that their business was being hurt and that they did not have many plague cases. Colbert sympathetically declared that a careful investigation should be made before the commerce of a large city was interrupted. He was ever anxious to restore trade to normal at the earliest possible moment, and it must have been with a sigh of relief that he saw the plague flicker out at Dieppe in 1670.<sup>26</sup>

Another phase of Colbert's interest in the health of France was his work to develop mineral springs. Some mineral springs, such as those of Saint-Galmier, Vichy, and Pougues, formed part of the royal domain, and all were placed more or less under state control by the revival of an edict of 1605. Their administration was entrusted to an official, the *surintendant des eaux minerales, bains, et fontaines de France*, an office filled in Colbert's time first by Dr. Vallot, *premier médecin du Roi*, and after him by his nephew, d'Aquin. Doctors were named as intendants of each set of springs by the superintendent. They had charge of the baths, and of the use and sale of the water. Sometimes they received a salary from the king; in other cases they were paid by a small fee for each bottle of water sold.

Colbert encouraged the search for new springs and the exploitation and study of those already known. At some of the springs, Vichy for example, bathing establishments, called *maisons royales*, and lodgings for poor persons were constructed at royal expense. The fees charged well-to-do patients were used to pay the expenses of the poor ones, who

<sup>25</sup> K, No. 119A, *liasse 1 bis*.

<sup>26</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 442-47.

were given baths and water free. No effort was made to raise money for the state from the springs, since it was felt that it was part of charity to see that they were properly used for the alleviation of disease. The bottling of the water was carefully supervised, to assure authenticity and purity.<sup>27</sup>

The connection of Colbert with another effort to cure disease and improve the health of the nation is not so clear. This effort had to do with a series of medicines known as the "Royal Remedy," because the king authorized and encouraged their distribution. That Colbert was sympathetic toward this work, if not instrumental in it, is indicated by the fact that his son, the marquis of Seignelay, sent these remedies to his estates, and arranged for their use in the hospital at Marseille and aboard the royal ships. The distribution of the remedy was allied to the effort to found local religious associations to care for the poor, which was part of the movement to create *hôpitaux généraux*, and will be discussed in that connection.<sup>28</sup>

The "Royal Remedy," which was also called the "Universal Remedy for the Poor," consisted of three compounds, put up in the form of boluses weighing about one and a half ounces each. One was yellow, one black, and one white on the outside, so that they could be distinguished from one another. Each type would cure all ills of man or beast, but not so promptly as all three used together according to directions. The black one, called "the Drug," was to be wrapped in a cloth and soaked for at least twenty-four hours in eight ounces of wine or cider. The resulting infusion was the medicine. The yellow and the white ones were to be powdered and taken in doses of eighteen grains. For all ills, the prescription was apparently the same. A dose of the white bolus was to be taken six hours after eating, preferably at 4 P.M. If the illness was "violent," a dose of the yellow powder was also to be taken, in a cooked apple or some confiture. If the patient vomited, the cure was "more prompt." The next day the patient at awakening was to be given four ounces of "the Drug," and two hours later a similar dose. If the fever did not abate, a dose of one ounce of "the Drug," in bouillon, was to be given every morning, and would cure "all illnesses

<sup>27</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 147-50, 320-21, doc. 48; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,741, fols. 125-27.

<sup>28</sup> The material on the "Royal Remedy" may be found in the "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 112-13, 118, 135-49; and in AD XIV, No. 1, in a document entitled "Règlemens des Assemblées politiques des paroisses, etc."

in two or three days." An enema of "the Drug" and the yellow medicine was also very efficacious.

This regimen, properly applied, was held to cure quickly and cheaply all curable ailments of men and animals. It was equally effective for a newborn babe or a decrepit oldster. It was a sovereign remedy for the plague, for all contagious diseases, and for the ills of sailors. Especially was it to be recommended for all women in labor, for it brought on the birth quickly and well, even in cases where all hope would normally be abandoned. The most ignorant could use the cure by following the simple directions of an instruction book. In fact, the simple-minded, with blind faith in the remedy, succeeded best. The remedies were equally effective in curing domestic animals, though the doses for them were probably somewhat smaller than for humans, since the cost of each medicine for a person was given as a *sou*, while for a sheep or a lamb it was only half a *sou*.

In the year 1670 the general assembly of the clergy of France approved the remedies and urged their distribution to the poor, on the grounds that they would save the lives of thousands of poor people and animals who were dying for lack of a good cheap medicine. A priest, who urged the use of the medicine, was able to show that 100,000 peasants and workers, 40,000 or 50,000 women in childbirth, plus quantities of unbaptized babes, plus 400,000 or 500,000 sheep and other animals, died each year for lack of proper remedies. A pamphlet, issued in 1681 to popularize the medicine, recounted his calculations and added that these deaths caused

the number of peasants to diminish, the land to be badly cultivated, the *taille*, the tithes, the rents of landlords and others to be poorly paid, as can be seen by the decrease in the income from all the lands of the kingdom, of which many are uncultivated.

Another pamphlet, issued in 1682 for the guidance of local charitable assemblies, pointed out that if the remedies were distributed to all who needed them, children of families ruined by illness would not be forced into poverty and beggary. Indeed by the medicines and other means, the "deluge of beggars would be quenched at the source." M. de la Vie, first president of the *Parlement* of Pau, caused the remedies to be distributed to all the poor who needed them, and reported that this step reduced the number of sick and of beggars, and decreased the expenses of the hospitals and charitable organizations by a third. A parish

could buy a year's supply of the remedies for 12 *livres*. Or the parish priest could buy them and distribute them as part of the church charity. Some objection was raised to the medicine by doctors and by the poor, on the ground that it contained antimony.<sup>29</sup> But actually, insisted the pamphlet, antimony was perfectly safe to use. The queen herself had taken it during childbirth twenty years before, and the king had used it also.

In 1680 the bishop of Vannes ordered the religious associations of his diocese to equip themselves with a pamphlet entitled *L'Aumônier médecin*, and with the *pâtes médicinales* for the poor prepared by doctors of Paris and recommended by the general assembly of the clergy of 1670. According to the pamphlets of 1681 and 1682, the remedies had even more august sponsors. After the action of the assembly of the clergy, the king ordered his *premier médecin* to investigate the remedies. Upon a favorable report from this functionary, the king ordered M. Pellisson, master of requests, to give the medicines free of charge, to all hospitals, missionaries, priests, bishops, and others who wished to distribute them to the poor. M. Pellisson was the official in charge of giving royal alms to converted heretics. He set up a center of distribution for the remedies, in the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés at Paris, under the direction of an agent named Clément.

The remedies were widely used in Brittany and Normandy. The ducs de Chaulnes and de Montausier sent them to their estates, and to hospitals in areas in which they were interested. The marquise de Seppeville and the maréchal de Bellfonds were active in giving out the medicines. Testimonials were prepared, including a discussion of a great number of cases in which the remedies had been used with success in childbirth. The king himself asked to see lists of those who sent in for the medicines for distribution, and of reported cures.

Religious motives were also brought to bear. An ecclesiastic was able to show, by theological argument and biblical quotations, that all Christians, especially priests and bishops, were bound to help the sick and to procure remedies for them, under pain of damnation. This could be done, as one of the pamphlets pointed out, "without having it cost anything, through the liberality of the king and through his charity."

<sup>29</sup> Antimony was popularized as a medicine by Paracelsus and other early medical figures. It is a poison like arsenic, and in small quantities is a most powerful irritant and depressant. Its employment in medicine was so abused that in 1566 the *Parlement* of Paris forbade the use of preparations based on it.



To urge on the Catholics, it was pointed out that the Huguenots were liberal in helping the poor and sick of their faith.

Aside from the charitable distribution of the remedies, they were sold commercially at the sign of the "Bon Pasteur," on the quai des Augustins in Paris, where a bolus of each of the three colors, sufficient for 300 or 400 treatments was to be had for an écu.<sup>30</sup>

### 3. THE POOR

Closely allied to the question of a large, productive, and healthy population was the problem of the poor. Colbert viewed it from several angles, and it could hardly be claimed that he worked out for it a unified, governmental policy. In the first place, in the interests of good order and of productivity, he was anxious to clear France of vagabonds and beggars and to put the able-bodied among them at work of some kind. In the second place, he was anxious to find work for all poor persons. From one point of view—and he was quite conscious of this aspect—all his work to encourage industry was motivated to some degree by his desire to create employment for poverty-stricken persons and areas. In the third place, he wished to provide for the care of juvenile, aged, and infirm paupers in such fashion that they should not interfere with public order, nor with business, and should, so far as that was possible, be given productive employment. In the creation of the *hôpitaux généraux* the last two aspects were, to a certain extent, fused.

*Beggars and vagabonds.*—Through all his years in office Colbert was interested in ridding France of beggars and vagabonds. The measures he supported were varied and usually harsh. In August, 1661, before he had fully attained his unique position as chief adviser to the king in all economic matters, an edict was issued. If Colbert was not involved in its preparation, it was, at least, not out of line with his policies.

The edict had special reference to Paris. It pointed out that although the *Hôpital général*, founded a few years earlier, was making satisfactory progress toward ridding Paris of idlers, the presence of large numbers of sturdy beggars was still a terrible problem. The worst anomaly of the situation was that farmers in the country were crying for hands to help with the harvest and to prevent the threatening famine. It was therefore provided that any sturdy beggar, who had been caught three times by the archers of the *Hôpital général*, was to be publicly

<sup>30</sup> See footnote 28 above.

flogged. If taken again, he was to be sent to the galleys for five years. Women thus caught four times were to be exiled from Paris for ten years.<sup>31</sup>

Five years later, upon Colbert's recommendation, a similar but more stringent policy was applied to all France. By a decree of the Council of State dated September 23, 1666, it was ordered that all Bohemians, vagabonds, and vagrants (*gens sans aveu*) were to leave the kingdom. If they failed to do so, royal judges and officials were authorized to send them to the galleys, attaching them to the first chain of galley slaves that came by, without trial or formality.<sup>32</sup> Colbert's desire to get more galley slaves was undoubtedly an added incentive for such legislation. In fact, in face of any particular labor shortage, Colbert was prone to think of the sturdy vagabonds as a possible source of supply. On October 18, 1669, he wrote to the sieur de la Feuille, an engineer, urging him to gather up able-bodied beggars and put them to work on the Canal of the Two Seas.<sup>33</sup>

On October 3, 1670, a royal ordinance was directed at the beggars of Paris. It ordered the directors of the *Hôpital général* to drive beggars out of their retreats and to capture them all, without distinction. A beggar twice caught was not to be released under any conditions, but was to be put at hard labor, in a separate establishment provided for that purpose.<sup>34</sup> Three years later, on August 13, 1673, Colbert sent a circular letter to the intendants, urging them strictly to enforce a new decree providing that vagabonds who did not leave the kingdom within one month were to be arrested and sent to the galleys. In 1677 Colbert again turned his attention to the Parisian beggars, for on July 27 he wrote to one of the directors of the *Hôpital général* to tell him that that institution was not doing its duty in catching beggars and keeping them in custody. "The only method," he declared, "of multiplying beggars infinitely is to let them know that they can get out of the *Hôpital général* once they have been shut up in it."<sup>35</sup>

In the last years of his life Colbert returned with renewed vigor to the problem of beggars and vagabonds. A royal declaration of March

<sup>31</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 1-3; "Manuscrits français," No. 18,605, fols. 427-30.

<sup>32</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 16,744, fol. 126 (213).

<sup>33</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 437.

<sup>34</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 18,605, fols. 453-54.  
<sup>35</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 93; VI, 47-48; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 232-35.

25, 1680, which was almost certainly his work, announced that the establishment of *hospitaux généraux* and the provisions against beggars contained in the edict of April, 1656, had not been sufficient "entirely to abolish this disorder." "Nothing could be more effective," it continued, "than to shut them up in places destined for that purpose, so as to punish them there by loss of their freedom, by the food that shall be given them, and by the work that they shall do." It had therefore been decided to establish new penalties, which might "make a stronger impression on the spirit of the vagabonds," and to punish beggar-vagabonds, "whom idleness plunges into an infinity of disorders and makes useless and burdensome members of the state."

It was provided, in accordance with this plan, that all able-bodied beggars taken in Paris or the vicinity were to be shut up for fifteen days or longer, as the directors of the *Hôpital général* should see fit. The sexes were to be separated, and all of the beggars were to be given as food "solely what is necessary for life and shall be employed on the roughest kind of work that their strength can endure." Second offenders were to be shut up for three months, third offenders for a year, and fourth offenders for life. Those in the last category were to be released on no pretext, even that of illness. If any men over twenty years old escaped or refused to do the tasks given them, they were to be sent to the galleys for life, with no right of appeal.<sup>36</sup>

Nor did Colbert confine his attention to the beggars of Paris, for on December 17, 1680, he sent a circular letter to the intendants, instructing them to put down and capture any bands of Bohemians in their districts and to judge them as vagabonds, since they served only "to torment and pillage the people." Two days later he wrote Le Blanc, the intendant at Rouen, telling him to capture and punish Bohemians, since the king was determined to rid the kingdom of "all this rabble [*canaille*]." <sup>37</sup>

That some of the intendants took their tasks in this connection seriously is indicated by a series of letters from Nicolas Foucault, intendant of Montauban, to Seignelay and Colbert, to tell them how assiduously he was condemning vagabonds and gypsies to the galleys. On January 9, 1681, he was able to report triumphantly, "Bohemians appear only rarely in my department, because of the care I take to have them

<sup>36</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1237, fols. 8-11.

<sup>37</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 141; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,752, fol. 346.

arrested and put in the chain of those condemned to the galleys." <sup>38</sup> A week earlier Colbert had written to the intendant, de Marillac, to say that although he did not believe a fine on gentlemen who harbored Bohemians would be necessary, he would report the suggestion to the king. He explained that since the king had ordered the intendants to arrest all Bohemians and condemn them as vagabonds, there was reason to believe "that being hunted everywhere," the kingdom would soon "be purged of them." <sup>39</sup>

De Marillac's proposal may, however, have had some effect, for on July 11, 1682, a new declaration by the king, against vagabonds and Bohemians, was issued. It forbade all persons to harbor them, and further provided that all so-called Bohemians and Egyptians were to be arrested, as required by previous enactments. The men were to be sent to the galleys; the women were to have their heads shaved; the children were to be sent to the *hôpitaux*. Second offenders were, in addition, to be flogged. <sup>40</sup> The problem was by no means solved through the various efforts at repression, for royal declarations of 1686 and 1700 point to the existence of beggars and vagabonds in much the same terms as the earlier documents. <sup>41</sup>

Partaking of the nature of an attempt both to reduce the number of vagabonds and to restrict what he considered idleness was Colbert's effort to control pilgrimages. A regulation of July 25, 1665, pointed out that many children went on pilgrimages to the shrine of St. James of Compostela, in Spain. On the way, many died, others fell into bad company, and still others failed to return to France. Thus the number of French subjects was reduced. All children were therefore forbidden to go on pilgrimages, unless they were provided with the permission of their parents or of their two nearest living relatives. An edict of August, 1671, went a good deal further. It declared that under the guise of becoming pilgrims, husbands deserted their wives and families, workmen their employers, and apprentices their masters. Many vagabonds claimed to be pilgrims. Some pilgrims stayed abroad and married, despite the fact that they had wives at home. To prevent such abuses, it was laid down that henceforth each pilgrim must have written per-

<sup>38</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 4,303, fols. 80, 118, 128.

<sup>39</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fol. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 393-94; AD XIV, No. 4, doc. 60.

<sup>41</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 164, 237-40.

mission from his bishop, and a certificate from the local authorities as to his station in life, including his marital status, and so forth. All pilgrims caught without the necessary documents were to be put in the stocks. For a second offense, they were to be flogged. For the third, they were to be treated like vagabonds.<sup>42</sup>

*The Hôpital général of Paris.*—Colbert's interest in the *Hôpital général* of Paris must have dated from its very foundation in 1656. At any rate, the road to fame and power had scarcely been opened to him by Mazarin's death before he received a letter (dated June 24, 1661) from the administrators of the *Hôpital*. They thanked him for the "advantages" he had secured their institution. They begged him to continue to help them. They asked his aid in securing some good building stone.<sup>43</sup> Though he occasionally seems to have thought of the *Hôpital* merely as a convenient place of detention for troublesome beggars and vagabonds, he continued to take an interest in it throughout his life. He even made it, at first, the focus of his project for revivifying the wool-stocking industry.

The famine conditions of 1662 severely strained the resources of the Parisian *Hôpital général* by reducing the gifts it received and increasing the number of poor for whom it had to care. In April the *Parlement* of Paris sought to relieve the strain by arranging for an assessment of about 100,000 *livres* upon the inhabitants of the city, like that by which funds were raised for street-cleaning. It also levied a tax of 100,000 *livres* on all holders of benefices in Paris and its vicinity, including even the archbishop. On the last day of June the *Parlement* issued a new decree to reënforce and clarify the provisions of the earlier one. These steps seem to have been insufficient, however, for on January 5, 1663, the *Hôpital* had only a two weeks' supply of flour and was very short of money. The *Parlement* again came to its rescue, and issued a decree authorizing it to borrow 100,000 *livres*.<sup>44</sup>

In the meanwhile, the *Parlement* had appointed two commissioners, Doviât and Saintot, to investigate the condition of the institution and its immediate needs. They reported on January 22 in some detail. The expenditures of the *Hôpital* had exceeded its income in every year since 1657, they pointed out. In 1661 the income had been 724,999 *livres*, the expenses 754,531 *livres*. In 1662 the income had risen to

<sup>42</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 59, 336-38.

<sup>43</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 102, fols. 798-99.

<sup>44</sup> AD XIV, No. 1, docs. 47, 49, 53.

776,869 *livres*, but the expenditures had gone up to 895,922 *livres*. In addition, the *Hôpital* had contracted a debt of 150,000 *livres*, largely through the purchase of grain, of which it used some 4 *muids* a day. It was caring for from 6,000 to 7,000 poor persons a year. Most of those who came to it had practically no clothes at all, and the *Hôpital* made a practice of giving a shirt, even to the ones who stayed only for a day. The buildings were so crowded that the inmates had to sleep three and four in a bed.

The archers employed to catch the poor and the beggars were having increasing difficulty, for mobs were daily organizing rescues of the captives. As a result, the poor were growing insolent. Meanwhile, the receipts from collections and poor boxes had fallen off by two-thirds. "Everything possible" was being done "to establish manufactures and trades in the *Hôpital*," but the directors were restrained by the fear of injuring the artisans of Paris and making more persons poor. Still, work was being provided for all those able to engage in it. The numbers in the different establishments and their occupations were:

*Grande Pitié*: 1,274 people in all. Of these, 236 were infirm, but made to work; 687 worked at all sorts of tasks; 351 little girls went to school. There were also 34 masters and mistresses.

*Petite Pitié*: 120 children, 8 officers.

*Scipion*: 34 women, without children; 16 girls who worked; 50 pregnant women; 147 nursing mothers; 200 weaned children; 11 officers.

*Bicêtre*: 336 who worked as cutlers, coopers, locksmiths, carpenters, weavers, drapers, tailors, and so forth; 540 children too small to work; 655 old and sick men; 177 men who knew no trade, but did unskilled work; 127 poor who did work around the house and got double portions of food; 10 officers.

*Salpêtrière*: 306 small children; 260 married persons; 281 imbeciles, and so forth; 1,732 girls and women who worked at all sorts of tasks. In addition, there were, in another house, 116 children, sick with the scurvy. The total of poor persons in the institutions was 6,262. The 1,400 *muids* of grain for them had cost 350,300 *livres* in 1662. The *Hôpital* was desperately in need of more funds, the commissioners concluded.<sup>45</sup>

After 1663, conditions in France improved somewhat, the famine

<sup>45</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 318, fols. 389-90.

ended, and the strain on the *Hôpital* was lessened. But in 1665 the poor women in the institution were so crowded that the king, by an edict in the month of April, set aside for women inmates another building. It was under the administration of the *Hôpital général*, but with a treasurer of its own. It was known as *La Maison de Refuge*, or *Sainte-Pélagie*.<sup>46</sup> It was also in 1665 that the directors, abetted by Colbert, undertook to establish the manufacture of woolen stockings in the *Hôpital*. Though at one time as many as 1,200 of the 6,000 inmates were engaged in this work, and though the directors hoped that the manufacture might be set up in *hospitaux* all over France, the attempt met with no permanent success.<sup>47</sup>

Though the *Hôpital général* was supposed to take care of all the poor of Paris, and the *Hôtel-Dieu* was supposed to take care of the sick, some of the old religious institutions continued to share in this work. For example, the *Hôpital de St. Jean Baptiste de la Charité*, of the order of *Bienheureux Jean de Dieu*, in the faubourg Saint-Germain, in an appeal for funds in 1669, explained that it served the sick poor and had expended 74,822 *livres* in 1668.<sup>48</sup> A decree of the *Parlement* of Paris of July 22, 1669, also indicates that a good many of the poor were receiving relief through alms of one sort or another in their home parishes, for it ordered a careful survey of the poor of each parish each year, to see if any were receiving aid who did not deserve it, if any were not receiving aid who did deserve it, and if any who were not in institutions should be sent to one of the *hospitaux*.<sup>49</sup>

At the same time, the work of the *Hôpital général* was slowly expanding. A group of pious persons had established a foundlings' home. In June, 1670, by royal edict, this institution was united to the *Hôpital*, and persons having feudal jurisdiction in Paris were taxed to contribute to its support. It was known as *La Couche*, and was situated near the cathedral of Notre Dame. In 1674 a second foundlings' home, in the faubourg Saint-Antoine was also acquired.<sup>50</sup>

A report of the directors of the *Hôpital général*, dated April 1, 1673, gives a good idea of its condition at this time. In the *Hôpital* proper were 6,478 persons, and in the foundlings' home were 1,421 children. The former cost 660,000 *livres* a year to run; the latter 90,000. The

<sup>46</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1220, fol. 14.

<sup>47</sup> See above, pp. 218 ff.

<sup>48</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 18,607, fols. 126-41.

<sup>49</sup> AD XIV, No. 4, doc. 59.

<sup>50</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1220, fol. 15; "Manuscripts français," No. 18,605, fols. 488-91.

foundlings' home had a regular income of only 25,000 *livres*, while the *Hôpital* had 323,500 *livres*, of which 25,500 *livres* came from a salt tax which had been granted it, 241,000 *livres* from a tax on wine consumed in Paris, and 57,000 *livres* from investments in land, *rentes*, and so forth. It is perhaps significant that no income derived from manufactures carried on in the institution, is mentioned. From the income, 68,000 *livres* had to be paid out in interest, so the net annual deficit was something like 470,000 *livres*, and this had to be met through charitable contributions and miscellaneous sources of revenue. Since the directors were appealing to the king for financial aid—specifically they were asking that the proceeds of a tax on barbers be granted them, and that the king should see that they received certain legacies—it is probable that they tried not to paint too rosy a picture of the financial condition of the *Hôpital*. But, even so, it was entering a difficult war period on none-too-sound a basis.<sup>51</sup> It may have been with a view to strengthening the institution that the king, by a declaration of April 29, 1673, made provision that the archbishop of Paris should be *ex officio* a director of the *Hôpital*.<sup>52</sup>

During the Dutch war official attention was somewhat distracted from the *Hôpital général*, but it seems to have grown, even in those difficult days. The *Salpêtrière*, for example, increased the number of its inmates from the 2,579 of 1663, to 3,963.<sup>53</sup> The end of the war permitted a renewal of interest in the problems of the *Hôpital*, and the year 1680 saw a number of important steps taken in regard to it.

By a royal declaration of March 23, 1680, the orphan asylum of *Saint-Esprit* was united to the *Hôpital général*. This asylum was an old foundation. It cared for orphans born in legitimate wedlock in Paris, receiving only girls and boys from three to seven or eight years of age. It took usually only those who had some money or property, which was given back to them when they left or used to teach them some trade. By a similar declaration of the same date, the *Hôpital des enfans rouges* was also joined to the *Hôpital général*. This institution had been founded by Francis I and Marguerite of Navarre, to care for orphans of parents from outside of Paris who died at the *Hôtel-Dieu*. If there were not enough of these, it received children from the suburbs of Paris.

<sup>51</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 18,605, fols. 457-60.

<sup>52</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1237, fol. 8.

<sup>53</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 317-18, doc. 38; Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, pp. 172-74.



Thus by 1680, through a process of absorption which was typical of the centralizing tendencies of the time, the *Hôpital général* had come to include nine establishments, of which four were large and five fairly small. The large ones were the *Pitié*, the *Salpêtrière*, the *Bicêtre*, and the *Scipion*. The small ones were the *Refuge*, or *Sainte-Pélagie*, the *Saint-Esprit*, the *Enfants rouges*, and the two foundling homes.<sup>54</sup> It is worth noting that by this process a number of hitherto separate institutions were brought together in such fashion as to make them easily susceptible to state control. In fact, particularly in the eighteenth century some of them took on more and more of the character of state penal institutions.

The tendency to modify the character of some of the component parts of the *Hôpital général* was already in evidence in 1680. On April 20 of that year new regulations were instituted, under the authority of royal letters patent. It was provided therein that children of artisans and other poor inhabitants of Paris up to the age of twenty-five, who used their parents badly, or who refused to work through laziness, or, in the case of girls, who were debauched or in evident danger of being debauched, should be shut up, the boys in the *Bicêtre*, the girls in the *Salpêtrière*. This action was to be taken on the complaint of the parents, or, if these were dead, of near relatives, or the parish priest. The wayward children were to be kept as long as the directors deemed wise and were to be released only on a written order signed by four directors. The culprits were to hear mass every Sunday and holy day; they were to pray for a quarter of an hour morning and evening; they were to be taught the catechism; and they were to learn to read pious works. In addition, they were to be made to work "as long as and at tasks as rude as their strength" would permit. If they showed signs of improvement, they were to be treated more leniently and to be taught a suitable trade. Their raiment was to be linsey-woolsey and wooden shoes, their food bread, water, and soup. If they earned enough, they were to be permitted to buy fruit or meat. Laziness and misbehavior were to be punished by reducing the soup and increasing the work, or by any other proper penalties. If a "poor girl" retired voluntarily to the *Hôpital*, she was to be well treated, taught a trade, and kept till a job could be found for her.

At the same time, it was arranged to shut up prostitutes and pro-

<sup>54</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1237, fol. 15; "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 105-8.

cureresses in a special part of the *Salpêtrière*. They were to be sent thither by the *lieutenant de la police du Châtelet*, who was to specify the term of imprisonment. They were to be given the same food, work, and treatment as the wayward children. If they showed signs of regretting their evil lives, they were to be given easier work and extra privileges. Any idleness, swearing, or misconduct was to be severely punished. It was planned immediately to accommodate 40 women of this type and 200 of the children.<sup>55</sup>

While the king was thus putting his authority behind parents and morals, and planning to use the *Hôpital général* for such corrective purposes, he was also providing for the incarceration there of beggars and vagabonds by his regulation of March 25, 1680, mentioned above. But the same regulation also made it clear that the *Hôpital* was to care for poor persons, children, old people, and those incurably ill of epilepsy and some other diseases, who could not take care of themselves. It was hoped that the establishment of *hôpitaux généraux* in the provinces would make it necessary to accept only persons native to Paris and the vicinity, or those who had lived there for a long time. The combination of Christian charity, state regulation, and local administration which the *Hôpital* represented was happily symbolized by the fact that the directors were ordered to meet in the house of the archbishop of Paris, or in that of the first president of the *Parlement*, and in that of the royal *procureur général*.<sup>56</sup>

*In the provinces.*—The feeling that the establishment of provincial *hôpitaux généraux* should relieve that of Paris from caring for poor other than those of the locality had a substantial basis in fact, for the years following 1661 had witnessed a widespread continuation of the movement for setting up such establishments. The motives behind the movement, like those back of the foundation of the *Hôpital* at Paris, were mixed. On the one hand, there was a very strong element of Christian charity and piety; and on the other hand, there was a persistent effort on the part of the government to solve the problem of beggars and of poor relief in a well-ordered and a well-organized fashion. In addition, there was the wish to provide work for idle hands, both to forestall the devil and to add to the productivity of the country.

The founding of provincial *hôpitaux généraux* was a natural contin-

<sup>55</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 448, fols. 370-73.

<sup>56</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XIX, 232-35; "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1237, fols. 8-11.

uation and result of the establishment of that at Paris. A royal edict of June, 1662, accompanied by a declaration of like tenor, ordered all provincial towns and cities to set up *hôpitaux*, and explained why this step was necessary and wise. In the first place, it was a Christian duty to provide for the poor, "to procure their salvation through Christian instruction, and to abolish beggary and idleness by training their children in trades of which they are capable." The *Hôpital général* of Paris had achieved the results expected of it, and the king had had the satisfaction of seeing Paris "relieved of the importunity of beggars," and the pauper-children "fed by Christian charity" and taught trades. In fact, the establishment of manufactures at the *Hôpital* had given the poor useful employment on a large scale. But despite the aid from private alms and from the king, and the collections made by priests, the *Hôpital* was being taxed beyond its means by the influx of poor from the provinces. Even if the revenues of the institution were increased, it would be unable to care for all the poor who came to Paris. "Besides it is not just that our good city of Paris should alone supply the food, which according to natural equity and the ordinances of our predecessors the other cities owe, each to its own poor."

Every city and large town was therefore to establish a *hôpital général*, in which its poor were to be shut up, lodged, and fed. Each city was to consider, as its own poor, persons who had been born there, or who had lived there for a year, and also orphan children and those born of beggar parents. The poor were not to be allowed to roam about or to come to Paris. All of them were to be "instructed in piety and the Christian religion and in trades of which they may be rendered capable." It was to be the duty of the *maires* and *échevins* to set about founding the local *hôpitaux*.<sup>57</sup>

In the work of founding the provincial *hôpitaux*, Colbert took an active interest, though it is frequently impossible to trace the exact extent of his efforts or his influence. But it was to Colbert that officials turned when they encountered difficulties or local opposition. For example, in June, 1669, Bouchu, the intendant in Burgundy, was endeavoring to carry out a new decree of May 27, 1669, ordering the establishment of *hôpitaux généraux*. To launch the work, Bouchu summoned a meeting at Dijon, but the members of the *Parlement* refused

<sup>57</sup> AD XIV, No. 1, docs. 48 and 50; "Manuscripts français," No. 18,605, fols. 40-41; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 68-70; cf. also Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 515.

to attend or coöperate, saying that the intendant was trying to usurp their functions. Bouchu straightway reported the matter to Colbert, and on July 14 sent the minister a project for the proposed institution. It was very badly needed he explained. But, he declared, it could not be established

unless you give it your especial protection, because of the opposition of the *Parlement*, which on every occasion works against all the good that anyone wishes to do. They are so stubborn about their own sovereignty that they believe that they are the only ones who can draw up documents and that the orders which come from the Council are usurpations, although I have done what I could to undeceive them, and although through your aid and protection I have had some little success in the matter and have fully established the authority of the king as against those who used not to recognize it; still I assure you, Monsieur, that I have not obliterated their desire for their former greatness, and they do not fail to say often that they are waiting for better times.<sup>58</sup>

It was Colbert, too, who awarded praise for successful efforts. In 1672 he wrote his brother Nicolas, bishop of Auxerre, to congratulate him on having found a building suitable for use as a *hôpital général*. "It is assuredly," he declared, "the greatest benefit you could confer upon the town of Auxerre." It was from Colbert that advice was sought in 1676, when the *Hôpital* at Rouen was short of money and overburdened with poor. It was Colbert who intervened to reorganize the financing of a new *hôpital* in 1679, in the town of Mende. The local authorities were planning to lay a tax on wine, to pay for the erection of such an institution. Colbert wrote the intendant and explained that the king disapproved of new taxes on foodstuffs, since there were royal levies on them; that the *hôpitaux* should be financed by voluntary charitable subscriptions; and that, if these proved insufficient, recourse might be had to assessments or taxes on houses.<sup>59</sup>

When disputes delayed the foundation of a *hôpital*, it was Colbert, wielding the royal authority, who cut through the entanglements and speeded the work. On February 8, 1680, he wrote in the name of Louis XIV to the intendant d'Herbigny, in these terms:

Monsieur d'Herbigny, being informed that the establishment of a *hôpital général* in my city of Grenoble has met thus far with certain difficulties as to the choice of a site on which to build it, I am writing you this letter to

<sup>58</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fols. 127, 133.

<sup>59</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 654; cf. also IV, 125; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 173, fol. 214; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 1.

tell you that it is my intention that it should be constructed on the square called Saint-Roch, and therefore that you should declare to the bishop of Grenoble and to all those having any interest in this establishment that it is my wish that there should be no further delay in establishing it.<sup>60</sup>

In many cases, however, the influence of Colbert in the foundation of provincial *hôpitaux* is not clear, for they sprang from a variety of circumstances, including not only pressure from the central government, but from local conditions, the example of neighboring towns, charitable impulses, and religious zeal. But it is to be noted that in almost every case the work of establishing a *hôpital général* was not considered complete until the central government had ratified the local measures and put its authority behind the new institution by means of royal letters patent or a royal declaration. Such ratification was obviously valuable when the foundation of the *hôpital* required the appropriation of property, the union or dissolution of older charitable institutions, or the levying of taxes. In most cases, it is more than likely that the letters patent passed through the hands of Colbert and were approved by him, for he had charge not only of economic matters, but also of the affairs of the church.

A few examples of typical foundations will serve to show how and why *hôpitaux généraux* were founded in the provinces in the period of Colbert. In August, 1672, a royal declaration for the establishment of a *hôpital général* at Angers was issued. It began by reciting the history of the attempts to care for the poor in that town. In 1554 the local authorities had decided to give public aid to the poor, but not to shut them up. This system, though confirmed by several kings, had gradually broken down. In 1615 the *maire, échevins*, and inhabitants had decided to reestablish public aid for the poor, but to shut them up in a central institution. This arrangement had been ratified by royal letters patent of the same year. It had been supported by voluntary assessments until 1627-30, when it broke down because of the load thrown on it by plague and famine. Thereafter, it was possible to care for only about 100 poor persons.

But "since for the glory of God, the public welfare, the relief and good order of the city," it was "necessary to enclose all the poor beg-

<sup>60</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, pp. 112-13. The letter was sent in the name of the king, but it was almost certainly drawn up by Colbert, for it is found among his dispatches to the intendants, it was enclosed with a letter of the same date from him to d'Herbigny, and it is in typical Colbertian style.

gars, and for the support of the *Hôpital général* and for the advantage of the poor, there to establish crafts and manufactures," and since for lack of space and money this could not be done in the existing institution, the *maire*, *échevins*, and inhabitants had met and deliberated on August 26, 1667. They decided to shut up all poor beggars native to the city, to reestablish the collection of funds for the poor, and to enlarge the buildings to house them.

By a royal decree of August 20, 1668, the intendant was ordered to investigate the matter. After he had reported, another decree dated April 1, 1669, had granted Angers permission to establish a *hôpital général*. Thus building on earlier foundations, the local authorities proceeded to set up and organize such an institution. The royal declaration of August, 1672, ratified what they had done and ordered various buildings and institutions to be united, to form the new *Hôpital*. It also laid down regulations for the government and support of the *Hôpital*, which may be summarized under seven heads.

1. All poor beggars, native to the town, were to be shut up in the *Hôpital*, and there to be fed, clothed, cared for spiritually, and put to work on manufactures.

2. There were to be eight directors—four ecclesiastics and four laymen.

3. No begging or giving of alms was to be allowed in Angers.

4. All legacies left for the benefit of the poor were to go to the *Hôpital général*. The *Hôpital* was to have the exclusive right to set up tents and booths for funerals and burials, and to charge a fee therefor. The old public collection of alms was to be reestablished for the benefit of the *Hôpital*.

5. In the *Hôpital* all sorts of manufactures might be established. A journeyman who worked six years teaching a trade or craft to the children in the institution was to earn thereby the right to be a master of his calling in Angers without payment of any fee. Similarly, a poor person who worked at a trade in the *Hôpital* for four years was to have the right to become a journeyman of that craft in Angers. If he worked six more years in the *Hôpital*, he was to be deemed a master.

6. The buildings of the *Hôpital* were to bear the royal arms. The *Hôpital* was to be exempt from all taxes and from the lodging of soldiers. It was to be provided with tax-free salt.

7. The directors were to have the right to punish the poor by flogging or other suitable chastisements. They were permitted to appoint archers to catch the poor. They were ordered to conduct regular searches to hunt out beggars and vagabonds. No one was to harbor or keep such poor persons.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1250, fols. 85-98.

In March, 1675, royal letters patent were issued for the establishment of a *hôpital général* at Auxerre. They pointed out that the beneficial effects of such an institution at Paris had made the king favor such *hôpitaux*, as "the only way to provide for the needs of the healthy poor and to withdraw them from the idleness and laziness in which they are ordinarily sunk."

On March 28, 1672, an assembly of the chief inhabitants, including the *maire*, *echevins*, and *gouverneur*, had asked the bishop, Nicolas Colbert, brother of the minister, to go forward with the project, and he had busied himself with it since that time. A royal decree of September 16, 1672, had arranged for financing the institution. Once the *Hôpital* was well launched, the local authorities had wished it confirmed by the king. The royal letters patent were an answer to this wish.

In general outline, they were much like those for Angers. But they differed in some points. The bishop of Auxerre was to be chief administrator of the *Hôpital*, though other directors were provided for. The institution was to be under the "special protection and care" of the king. All persons were forbidden to aid the poor in resisting the archers. Priests and notaries were to remind all persons making wills to bequeath something to the *Hôpital*. Officials on taking office, and journeymen on becoming masters, were to make a gift to the institution. The income from certain charitable foundations was granted to it. Journeymen serving in the *Hôpital* for six years were to be deemed masters.<sup>62</sup>

The *Hôpital général* at Poitiers, which also received its letters patent in 1675, though it had been opened in 1657, was governed by much the same rules and aided by much the same sort of grants. It was modeled directly on the *Hôpital général* of Paris. Its board of directors was unusually large, since it consisted of eighteen notable persons under the authority of the municipal officials. It was permitted to set up poor boxes to collect funds, and to it was assigned a portion of the fines collected in the town. Children from the *Hôpital* could be put into apprenticeship without the payment of any fee. As at Auxerre, journeymen serving six years in the manufactures of the *Hôpital* were to receive the status of masters.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> AD XIV, No. 1, doc. 69; "Collection Joly de Fleury," No. 1250, fols. 513-17.

<sup>63</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 318, doc. 39; P. Rambaud, *L'Assistance publique à Poitiers, jusqu'à l'an V*, I, 418-63.

A somewhat special case was the *Hôpital général* at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Letters patent establishing it were issued by the king in June, 1681. According to this document the chief motive for setting it up lay in the fact that the occasional presence of the court there attracted swarms of beggars. All such persons were to be shut up in the new *Hôpital*. Further regulations, issued on the last day of February, 1684, expanded these directions somewhat. All begging save by religious persons was forbidden. Poor, native to the town or the surrounding district, were to be received and fed at the *Hôpital*. In addition, all poor persons found begging while the court was there were to be arrested and shut up. The directors of the institution were to give the poor a suitable proportion of the profit derived from the manufactures established in the *Hôpital*. The guilds of Paris were to supply journeymen to teach trades and crafts to the inmates. The king would reward such instructors by making them masters in Paris, or Saint-Germain, or giving them some other suitable compensation.<sup>64</sup>

The royal letters patent of August, 1682, founding the *Hôpital général* at Laval, are notable for several reasons. In the first place the preamble set forth the reasons for the establishment of the *Hôpital* at somewhat greater length than usual. It read thus:

The special favors with which it has pleased God, with a quite unique patronage (*une protection toute singulière*), to bless our reign since our accession to the crown, requires indeed that we should gladly seize every opportunity offered to do something for His glory. It is this thought which we keep always before us in our highest and most important undertakings, which have met with such happy success that we are forced to recognize that the advantageous results are entirely the work of Heaven and obligate us more and more to thank God for all his kindness. And since we know directly from Him that nothing is more pleasing to Him than charity, which consists largely in helping the unfortunate whom birth or adversity has reduced to beggary: We have always regarded the establishment of *hospitaux généraux* as the thing most completely in conformity with the duty of the eldest son of the Church; also we are pleased that our edicts in this matter have succeeded so well that, having created in a number of cities these happy retreats from the afflictions of poverty, they have also at the same time increased manufactures through the different products upon which the poor therein are put to work, so that by a marvelous accord arts and crafts are seen to flourish in these divine refuges amidst Christian teachings and praise of God, a thing which contributes not a little to the felicity of our state. All these reasons have made us receive with joy the news that has

<sup>64</sup> AD XIV, No. 1, doc. 74.



been given us by our very dear and well beloved cousin, the duc de la Tremoille: that the inhabitants of our city of Laval, having projected the establishment of a *hôpital général* there, he would the more gladly give it his approval in that beggars would not only find a sure asylum and the instruction necessary for their salvation, but also the wherewithal to work and keep busy, there being grounds for hoping that it may be possible to reëstablish in that city the old linen industry which used formerly to make it so rich and so important, and for this purpose he has very humbly begged us to be willing to grant our letters patent essential for this.

The regulations for the *Hôpital général* at Laval, which followed in the letters patent, were somewhat more elaborate in form than those of Auxerre or Angers. But in substance they were much the same. It was specifically provided, however, that the industries established in the *Hôpital* must conform to the manufacturing regulations applicable to private enterprises. The poor were to be given "some small share" of the proceeds, "to animate them more for the work."<sup>65</sup>

That the work of some of the provincial *hôpitaux* was of sufficient importance to merit the king's praise is indicated by some figures showing the state of the *Hôpital général* of Rouen, in March, 1676. At that time there were lodged in it 600 or 700 poor. Work was provided for an equal number, who were not shut up in the *Hôpital*. Alms and aid were also given by it to nearly 1,900 families.<sup>66</sup>

The mixture of religious and secular motives displayed in the preamble to the letters patent for the *Hôpital* at Laval was typical of the forces which led to the founding of these institutions. Another example is to be found in the fact that on June 6, 1676, the king sent to some, and perhaps to all, of the bishops and archbishops of France a *lettre de cachet*, urging them to assist in the foundation of *hôpitaux généraux* in the cities and towns of their dioceses. With the *lettre* were dispatched copies of the edict of 1662, ordering the establishment of *hôpitaux*. The hard times, explained the king, prevented his giving financial aid to the work, but they made the creation of such institutions more than ever imperative.<sup>67</sup>

*Religion and Charity.*—The influence of religious and charitable motives in the founding of provincial *hôpitaux généraux* can scarcely be exaggerated. In fact, during the years 1676–82, large numbers were founded in a wave of religious zeal that swept wide areas of France,

<sup>65</sup> AD XIV, No. 2, doc. 75.

<sup>66</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 173, fol. 214.

<sup>67</sup> Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, p. 222; "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 23–26, 35–37.

and especially the province of Brittany. Behind this movement, which had an almost revivalist character, was a Jesuit, Father Chaurand (1615-97). Behind him, supporting and encouraging him, there seems to have been a group of pious and devout persons of Paris, who were sometimes referred to as the *Assemblée charitable* of that city. This group, organized about 1677, with a central office in the place Saint-Sulpice, was active also in the distribution of the Royal Remedy, and it was probably the same people who some years earlier did much to alleviate the famine of 1662. As a background for these developments, it must be remembered that France in the seventeenth century witnessed a veritable revival of religion, which manifested itself on the one hand in the formation of charitable and religious groups, and on the other in an increase in religious zeal which made the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 both natural and inevitable.

Father Chaurand seems to have interested himself in a variety of endeavors to bring Christian principles into everyday life. In 1675, for example, in the little town of Château-du-Loir he succeeded in settling 100 lawsuits out of court.<sup>68</sup> But by 1677 and 1678 he was immersed in a campaign to establish provincial *hôpitaux généraux*. A pamphlet printed about this time, or a little later, tells in great detail of the methods he employed in his work, which he regarded as an effort to carry out the king's policy, as outlined in the edict of 1662.<sup>69</sup>

When Father Chaurand arrived in a new town or city, he gathered the officials and the ecclesiastics in a meeting and showed them the king's circular letter of 1676 to the bishops, and the orders of the local bishop and governor on the subject. He then described to the group his experience in other places, telling them how easy it was to found a *hôpital général* and how beneficial such an institution was, once founded. He pointed out that there were thirty persons rich, or fairly well off, for every really poor person, and that if each well-to-do individual gave only an *écu* a year, it would take care of all the poor. The leavings from the tables of the rich could be well employed in feeding the poor. Moreover, Father Chaurand insisted, the establishment of a *hôpital* actually reduced the number of the poor by half, since it caused all the vagabonds to flee. The first step in founding a *hôpital* was to rent some small houses and furnish them through gifts of furni-

<sup>68</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 49-50; Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, pp. 221, 218 ff.

<sup>69</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 53-54.

ture and bedding. In the course of time, gifts and legacies would provide the wherewithal to erect adequate buildings.

The next day Father Chaurand would preach along the same lines, and read the king's letter to the bishops. He took pains to cite the scriptural injunctions to care for the poor, both physically and spiritually. He also pointed out that the existing royal ordinances provided for assessments, if charitable contributions were insufficient, though he regarded them as a last recourse. Next, Father Chaurand would hold a meeting to form a *confrérie* (religious association), so as to give form and organization to the movement. At a second and larger meeting, directors would be chosen to visit the poor and to investigate conditions. The expenses of the foundation would be calculated, and collections of money, clothes, and furniture would be commenced. Father Chaurand would also direct the local priests to instruct their penitents to assist the work.

Father Chaurand worked hard to enlist the priests in his project and to show them "how *hôpitaux* and *confréries* must be established and maintained." He explained "that they must be established during the heat of a mission and that one must wait till after the establishment to get letters patent." It took a long time to get such letters, and the delay gave an opportunity to those who opposed the plan to thwart the attempt for "long years," as had actually happened at Narbonne and at Cahors.

On this point, Father Chaurand was insistent. He took as an example the Capuchins. This order was able to establish new monasteries and convents everywhere, because it did not wait to secure authorization or buildings or money, but went ahead with its work, trusting to God to provide. In contrast, the Cordeliers and the Recollets, who sought authorization and tried to be provident, succeeded in making no new foundations. Indeed, Father Chaurand called his establishments *hôpitaux à la Capucine*, to indicate the manner of their founding. Sometimes, however, they were called *hôpitaux à la façon de Bretagne* (Breton style), after the province where the method was most successfully employed. Contrary to what might have been expected, a *hôpital* set up in this fashion, as a result of a campaign of only twelve or fifteen days, lasted "forever like those for the sick," or at least so Father Chaurand claimed.

Furthermore, while a hundred decrees of the Council of State would not found a *hôpital*, according to Father Chaurand, his technique was

uniformly successful. It could be used to revive a languishing or decayed *hôpital*, as well as to found a new one. In small cities, like Vire or Mayenne, satisfactory results could be obtained and all begging stopped merely by the formation of a *confrérie*, without starting an *hôpital*.

A good many objections were raised to Father Chaurand's arguments and methods, but he had worked out answers to them all. To those who declared that it was not right to shut the poor up, until provision had been made for feeding and supporting them, or that it was cheaper to feed the poor in their own homes, he replied that experience had shown that *hôpitaux* founded à la *Capucine* got along and increased in resources as they attracted legacies, and so forth, and that such establishments not only reduced the number of poor but also made it possible to feed them at less cost. When anyone said that it was wrong to annex existing foundations to a new *hôpital* and thus thwart the wishes of the original founders, Father Chaurand responded that the king had authorized this procedure, and that, anyway, it was a matter for the secular and the ecclesiastical authorities to decide.

Some of the other objections, and Father Chaurand's replies, may be conveniently summarized thus:

1. Alms given in the street are never noticed by the donor, while regular contributions to support a *hôpital général* would be a burden.

On the contrary, a rich person would have to give only an *écu* a year, which was really nothing. In return, crime and disease would be reduced, and importunity in the streets ended.

2. Gathering the poor together in a single spot would increase disease.

On the contrary, it is the poor, loose, and dirty, who cause disease, not those shut up and kept clean.

3. It is contrary to the law of God to shut up married poor persons, and thus separate man and wife.

But it is possible to follow the example of Paris, and feed the married poor in their homes. If the recipients of such aid were caught begging, they would be lawbreakers and their separation would be justified.

4. Charity needs to be stimulated by the presence and the importunity of beggars.

The directors of the *hôpital* would relieve the beggars of this function by holding public collections every month, and otherwise stimulating charity.

5. Beggars occupy little houses that could not be rented to other persons.

They occupy dirty holes and pigsties, and pay little if any rent. Most of the poor shut up are old, young, or infirm.

6. *Hôpitaux* tend to make people lazy and shiftless, since the poor know they can always find refuge there; and they attract the poor from the countryside.

On the contrary, the poor look upon the *hôpitaux* as prisons and hate to enter them. The establishment of one drives out the vagabonds. If any came in from the country, they might be imprisoned in a dark cell for three days on bread and water and then released. Their reports would serve to keep others away. Furthermore, the number of poor tends to increase when they receive assistance in their homes, but decreases when they are shut up.

7. All novelties are odious. The practice of the early Church does not sanction the shutting up of the poor.

On the contrary, the *hôpitaux* are the best way to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of the poor, and the Holy Scripture enjoins the best possible provision for them.

How his principles and theories worked out in practice was reported by Father Chaurand to the secretary of the *Assemblée charitable* of Paris, in a series of letters. These missives were then printed and sent out to help the campaign in other places. In a letter dated December 20, 1677, Father Chaurand described his work in Saint-Brieuc in Brittany, in these terms: <sup>70</sup>

Thanks be to God we have established a *hôpital général* in this city in eight days. I arrived here the twenty-ninth of last month; I began to preach the next day; and the infirm poor were shut up eight days later. And the able-bodied ones who wished it were assisted in their homes, as at Lyon.

We had more difficulty than at Tréguier, because this city is much poorer. It has no seaport, no linen trade, no manufacture. Most of the people earn their living only by spinning, and this work produces almost nothing, now that the commerce in linens has been ruined.

The cathedral of this city is also very small; there are only sixteen canons. However, contrary to every human expectation, we established our *hôpital*; the presence, the zeal, and the charity of Monseigneur, the bishop of Saint-Brieuc, contributed to it more than anything else. He gave the income of his secretariat, which is worth 500 livres a year.<sup>71</sup>

We followed the same order as at Tréguier. In our first sermons we showed the possibility, the ease, and the indispensable obligation that there is of procuring for the poor all the temporal and spiritual aid they need, and that this was possible without asking the king for anything, without making an assessment on the people, and without individuals being obliged to increase their alms if they did not wish to.

Father Chaurand went on to relate how he had told the Briochains that even though the city was in an unsatisfactory economic condition, it could care properly for its poor if each of the well-to-do gave only

<sup>70</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fol. 55; Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, pp. 233 ff.

<sup>71</sup> The italics in this paragraph and the next one are in the printed letter.

a *sou* a week. He had pointed out that "there were still wine shops in the city and ribbons and laces," and that one need only to save some slight superfluous expense in order to give enough to the poor. He continued with his usual arguments, reënforcing them by the example of Tréguier, where a *hôpital* had been founded after a campaign of only ten days. He distributed printed matter, supplied by the *Assemblée charitable* of Paris, and read the letter from the king to the bishops.

As a result of Father Chaurand's exhortations, a *confrérie* was quickly formed, officers were elected, and directors for the *Hôpital* chosen. It was decided that the *Hôpital* should be governed by the regulations used for that at Lyon, on which the Paris institution had been modeled. A house-to-house collection produced 300 to 400 *livres* in money or in kind, although there were only 200 or 300 houses in Saint-Brieuc. Pledges of a similar sum every month were secured, and the *Hôpital* was furnished in two days.

In another letter of the same sort, dated July 13, 1678, Father Chaurand told of his work at Rennes:<sup>72</sup>

I found a great deal more difficulty here than in the bishoprics of Tréguier, Léon, and Saint Brieuc. This city is now relatively much poorer and is more burdened with beggars than the smaller cities of the province, because of the removal of the *Parlement*. There is here neither a seaport, nor a river, nor any considerable manufacture, and the number of poor has doubled since the *Parlement* has gone.<sup>73</sup>

Besides that, the *Hôpital général* of this place was begun twenty-eight years ago by the late M. Brequinni, the senior *président à mortier*, which, despite divers decrees, was unable to enclose the beggars; at various times what might be called forcible methods had been tried.

Beside that, too, instead of receiving the good poor of the place, certain kinds of manufactures had been established, poor from other cities were taken in, taught crafts, and paid. This caused the people to have no affection for this *Hôpital*, and even caused certain merchants to fear that an effort was afoot to establish in it exclusive manufactures, instead of following the example of Lyon and having the poor work for the merchants of the city, and this was the reason why few gifts and legacies came to this *Hôpital*.

Father Chaurand ran into still further difficulties. He could not establish *confréries*, because they would have become involved in politics. Finally, however, he got things going through "the aid of God," though the obstacles were so great that it seemed to him a "miracle of

<sup>72</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 56-57.

<sup>73</sup> The *Parlement* had been removed because of the antitax risings a few years before.

grace." He organized an inspection of the poor and a collection, which brought in 1,500 *livres* in money and kind and secured pledges of monthly gifts of a similar amount. Twelve carts were used to collect the furniture that was donated. So poor was the city that Father Chaurand regarded these results as "a second miracle."

Fifty poor [his letter went on] were shut up, and a like number, or thereabouts, were helped in their houses, as at Lyon, because they could not earn enough to live on.

Here is a third miracle, we found the wherewithal to clothe in new garments all the poor who were shut up. M. le duc de Chaulnes, who always sets an example, gave 300 *livres*, which stimulated the charity of everybody.

The formal and solemn enclosure of the poor, with the bishop of Rennes officiating, was postponed until the duc de Chaulnes returned from a three weeks' trip. The celebration took place on the first Sunday in July, and consisted of a ceremony in the cathedral, a procession, prayers in the courtyard of the *Hôpital*, and a supper for the poor. At the supper the duke and the marquis of Cuatlogon served the poor men, while the duchess and other ladies waited upon the poor women. The meal, provided by the generosity of the duke, included for each of the poor a piece of roast veal, a 2-*sous* pigeon pastry, a half a chicken, bread, cherries, and Graves wine.

A manuscript description<sup>74</sup> of these events in Rennes adds some details to the account. Father Chaurand had, it seems, minimized his own share in the proceedings. He had preached three sermons a day in the cathedral for six weeks, and it was by his eloquence that the city was stirred to action. A procession was held to start things off, as well as to conclude the campaign. All beggars foreign to the city were ordered out of it by the duc de Chaulnes. In addition to getting enough furniture collected to furnish the *Hôpital*, Father Chaurand set the women and girls to working sewing on bedding, and so forth. Even before the *Hôpital* was opened, collections of bread for the poor were started in each parish. Some of the supplies for the institution were secured by sending out carts to gather the remnants of food from the big houses. The poor in the *Hôpital* were so well off that new applicants for admission appeared voluntarily. Though after the opening of the *Hôpital* no alms were given outside it to any poor without careful investigation, bread was given to 128 deserving families in the city.

<sup>74</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 66-74.

A little earlier in the same year, Father Chaurand had founded a *hôpital* in his usual fashion at Lannion. As at Rennes, the poor were taken to the institution in a solemn procession. The well-to-do showed their Christian zeal by washing the feet of the poor. So great was the enthusiasm that one merchant gave a house and garden; a man and his wife gave all their property; and other rich persons adopted poor individuals and promised to care for them. At Guingamp, in March, 1678, the rich washed the feet of the poor and became their god-fathers and godmothers. At Morlaix there was more difficulty than at Guingamp, but the poor were shut up on April 10.<sup>75</sup>

A pamphlet was printed toward the end of 1678 by the secretary of the *Assemblée charitable* at Paris, to show why and how *hôpitaux généraux* should be founded. In it, the secretary declared that he had assisted in that year in establishing twenty *hôpitaux à la Capucine*. The *Hôpital général* of Paris he describes as *à la semy-Capucine*, since it was dependent for its existence on large annual contributions from charity. In the same year the *Assemblée charitable* issued a pamphlet telling of the need for *hôpitaux*. It was also prepared to supply those interested in the work with directions as to how to obtain letters patent for a *hôpital*, and with the model regulations of the *Hôpital* at Lyon. It had also for distribution a series of pamphlets entitled *l'Aumônier chrestien*, *l'Aumônier industrieux*, *l'Aumônier des champs*, and *l'Homônier médecin*. Also, it offered to supply, free of charge, missionaries to help in founding *hôpitaux*, since "one sees by experience that the aid of missionaries is absolutely necessary to excite the charity of the people."

A pamphlet, dated 1680, ascribed to Father Chaurand the foundation of twenty *hôpitaux généraux à la Capucine* in the previous two or three years. It discussed his methods and explained how he listed the poor and separated them into categories. The most difficult cases were the "ashamed poor" (*pauvres honteux*), bourgeois and gentlefolk in such reduced circumstances that they needed aid, though they were still unwilling to ask or receive it publicly. These Father Chaurand arranged to help secretly. Another pamphlet of the same year lists forty-one *hôpitaux*, founded in the preceding two years "à la Capucine or at least à la semi-Capucine, that is to say where there was very little to begin with." The list is as follows:<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 58-64.

<sup>76</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 61, 78-79, 93-96, 114-18.



"In Brittany, by the Reverend Father Chaurand: (1) Tréguyer; (2) Lannion; (3) Guingamp; (4) Morlaix; (5) Saint-Brieux; (6) Lambale; (7) Saint-Paul-de-Léon; (8) Lesneven; (9) Landerneau; (10) Saint-Renan; (11) Quimper; (12) Quimperlay; (13) Khaës; (14) Henbont; (15) Auray; (16) Saint-Malo; (17) Dinan; (18) Permel; (19) Fougères; (20) Vitré; (21) Rhedon; (22) Dol; (23) Guimené; (24) Isle de Ruis; (25) Rennes, finished *à la Capucine*, begun twenty-eight years ago *à la Benedictine*, that is to say they were waiting for sufficient funds to enclose all the poor.

"In Normandy, by divers missionaries: (26) Vismontier; (27) Pont-l'Évesque; (28) Verneuil; (29) Caen, finished as at Rennes, begun twenty-eight years ago *à la Benedictine*. (30) Vernon, *idem*; (31) Bordeaux, *idem*; (32) Laval; (33) Montargis; (34) Mende; (35) Montpellier; (36) Nîmes; (37) Le-Moustier-Saint-Jean; (38) Pau; (39) Lescar; (40) L'Isle-en-Avignon; (41) Toulon, as soon as there was talk of establishing a *hôpital général*, the abbé de la Valette left it 9,000 *écus*: everywhere else, no one dies who does not give liberally a part of what he cannot take with him, since he sees the people freed from the importunity of begging and all the poor instructed in piety and trades."

The same pamphlet goes on to explain the methods used by Father Chaurand. It urges missionary workers to "preach strongly" that alms must be given "on penalty of damnation." It cites the example of the bishops of Tréguier, Arras, Quimper, Senez, Lescar, Evreux, and so on, who authorized their priests to refuse absolution to those who did not each month give alms, according to their means. It pointed out that it was crucial for the success of a *hôpital* that all begging be stopped. If it were not, the institution was bound to go to pieces. It declared triumphantly that the king's edict of 1662, though reënforced by other edicts and decrees, had not secured the foundation of a single *hôpital* in eighteen years, while missionary work had established forty in two years. It explained also that the efforts were not being confined to France, since printed matter about these charitable foundations had been sent to the Kings of Poland and Spain, the emperor, the pope, the vice-legat at Avignon, and to M. Mulandin, governor in Switzerland.

In the years after 1680, Father Chaurand seems to have centered part of his efforts in Normandy, and to have remained active at least up to the time of Colbert's death. On November 27, 1683, the intendant at

Caen wrote to Le Peletier, the new *contrôleur-général des finances*. He told of the establishment of *hôpitaux généraux* at Vire, Valognes, Coutances, Saint-Sauveur, Granville, Carentan, Thorigny, and Saint-Lo, and even in smaller places. These establishments, he declared, were set up largely through the efforts of Father Chaurand. They seemed to "banish equally mendicity and idleness," since after the church services on Sunday morning, the gentlemen and the priests were accustomed to examine the poor, giving aid to the infirm, and finding work for the able-bodied. It is said that before his death Father Chaurand succeeded in founding 126 *hôpitaux généraux*.<sup>77</sup>

*Aid from local groups and the state.*—Closely associated with the campaign to found *hôpitaux généraux*, led so diligently by Father Chaurand and backed by the *Assemblée charitable* of Paris, was a movement to establish *confréries*, or religious associations, to work among the poor and sick. In the larger towns, the *confréries* were looked upon as a step toward founding and supporting the *hôpitaux*. In the smaller places, they were used to replace the *hôpitaux*. But they had a number of other objects. They sought, like Father Chaurand, to settle lawsuits out of court, and in 1680 they were reported to have arbitrated or ended 20,000 suits. They sought to convert heretics, and Daguesseau, intendant of Languedoc, was reputed to have been assisted by them in the conversion of 4,000 heretics in 2 years. They were active, too, in distributing the Royal Remedy, and on one occasion, at least, this served as an instrument of conversion, for a rich Huguenot woman fulfilled a vow and became a Catholic after she had been cured by these medicines.

The *confréries*, of which the first was founded at Macon in 1623, seem to have owed their inspiration to two saints. One was St. Vincent de Paul (1576-1660), who had formed such religious groups for charitable work during his lifetime. The other was St. Carlo Borromeo (1538-84), a reforming archbishop of Milan, famous for his work among the sick. After him these new groups were called *confréries de la charité de S. Charles Borromée*. Their formation was approved and aided by the *Assemblée charitable* of Paris, which had ready for free distribution printed material telling of their value, how to organize them, and so forth.

<sup>77</sup> Boislisle, *Correspondance des contrôleurs-généraux*, I, 8; Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 124.

The *confréries* were usually founded through the activity of missionaries like Father Chaurand. They included members of both sexes, though the work done by the men and the women was frequently of a different nature. The government seems to have approved of the *confréries*, and the general assembly of the clergy in 1670 recommended them. The bishop of Lescar ordered them to be organized in his diocese in 1677; the bishop of Evreux took a similar step in 1679, as did the bishop of Vannes in 1680. A pamphlet of 1680 declared that thousands of such *confréries* had been formed.

Though the program of the *confréries* included all sorts of charitable work, from the improvement of conditions in prisons to the storing of grain so as to prevent famines, one of their chief activities was to feed and care for the poor. They sought to end begging and to find employment for the idle. In many cases it was through the *confrérie* of a town that a *hôpital général* would be formed. But in smaller communities, the *confrérie* did the work of the *hôpital*, of investigating the poor, providing food for them, finding jobs for them, and in general, organizing poor relief. To shame the Catholics into activity, it was pointed out how well the Huguenots fulfilled the scriptural injunction to care for their poor.<sup>78</sup>

In some smaller places, especially in Brittany, there was another type of organization which did the work that a *hôpital* might have performed in a city or town. These were called *assemblées politiques*, and consisted of an organization of the leading citizens of the place. Their objectives were to instruct the poor in piety, to care for their temporal needs, and to put an end to begging, with its accompanying disorders. These *assemblées* had officers, organized collections for poor relief, supervised the distribution of food and work, and were active in the use of the Royal Remedy among the poor. Where *confréries* existed, the *assemblées* were supposed to coöperate, rather than to compete with them.<sup>79</sup>

These *assemblées* were specifically authorized by a decree of the *Parlement* of Brittany, dated May 5, 1680. It explained that under the edict of 1662, *hospitaux généraux* had been established with beneficial effect in many towns and cities. But many beggars, not wishing

<sup>78</sup> For material on the *confréries*, see "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 49-54, 61, 112-13, 114-18, 122-42; Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, pp. 229 ff.

<sup>79</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 122-49.

to be shut up, had fled from the towns to the country, where in bands they stole and created disorders. Each parish was therefore to feed its own poor, and to organize an assembly to determine the easiest and best ways of doing so. Abbeys, priories, and other religious institutions which were required by their charters to give public alms to the poor, were to do so through the parish assemblies, so as to prevent the gathering of wandering beggars. If the alms given by such institutions were more than sufficient for the parish, the surplus was to be turned over to the nearest *hôpital général*. All poor persons were to go back to the places of their birth. If they did not do so, they were to be liable to arrest, with flogging as a penalty for the first offense, and the galleys for the second. No one was to harbor vagabonds nor aid them. Poor pilgrims were to be punished as vagabonds, if they did not have certificates from their home authorities making clear their status. The decree was to be made public in all the churches.

A year later, on May 12, 1681, a new decree of the Breton *Parlement* was issued. It declared that the earlier decree had succeeded well where it had been enforced, but that beggars and vagabonds had taken refuge in those areas where its provisions had not been carried out. Certain abbeys and priories in particular had ignored the decree, given alms in the old way, and occasioned large gatherings of beggars, and this despite an enforcing order, issued by the *Parlement* on August 3, 1680. It was therefore ordered that any religious institution giving alms in the old way should be liable to a fine of 300 *livres*, and should be held responsible for any disorder arising in its vicinity.<sup>80</sup>

In Normandy a somewhat different method of reorganizing the giving of relief by religious institutions was tried at the same period. On October 24, 1680, Colbert wrote thus to Le Blanc, the intendant at Rouen:<sup>81</sup>

The distribution of wool to the poor by the abbeys, the establishment, and the increase of manufactures are of so great an advantage to the state because they banish idleness from it, that there is no effort more useful than that to which I urge you, as you will easily realize, if you will reflect a little on the number of idle rascals who are found round about the abbeys where general alms are given without distinction, as at Jumièges and Bec.

A little later Colbert wrote again to say that he was sure it would be difficult to get the abbeys to give out wool to be spun and worked up

<sup>80</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 319, fols. 109-11, 119-20.

<sup>81</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fol. 320; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 714.

by the poor, as a means of earning aid, but, he added, "You must work to overcome these difficulties, since assuredly there is nothing so important in the provinces as to diminish idleness in them, if it cannot be ended entirely." On November 28 Colbert, in still another letter to Le Blanc, reiterated his plea, and added that nothing increased idleness so much as public alms given indiscriminately.<sup>82</sup>

On January 31, 1681, he returned to the same subject, and praised Le Blanc in these terms:

You have done very well to get the monks of Fécamp to make the poor, to whom they give alms, work, there being nothing so harmful to the state as the begging of the sturdy poor who could work. These monks could divide what they give to the poor, half in bread, and half in wool, on condition that they bring back the wool made into stockings; thus from time to time decreasing the bread and increasing the wool, one could eliminate beggary, save for the sick and infirm poor who could not work; and you can easily realize that you could, perhaps, do nothing more useful to the province and more necessary to the state.<sup>83</sup>

Of all phases of the problem of the poor, it was probably this matter of finding work for them, of "withdrawing them from idleness," that interested Colbert most. The edict of 1662 and supplementary enactments and declarations of 1673, 1676, and so forth, had insisted on the necessity of giving the poor in the *hôpitaux généraux* useful work to do, and of training them to earn their own livelihood. The foundation of the provincial *hôpitaux* gave ample opportunity for efforts in this direction, for what with the campaign of Father Chaurand, and the general movement to establish such institutions, there must have been set up in cities and towns all over France more than 200 *hôpitaux*, in the years 1661-83. Lille, Valenciennes, Laon, Soissons, Orléans, Montargis, Chaumont, Reims, Troyes, Autun, Nevers, Le Mans, Parthenay, Saint-Maixent, Châtellerault, Saintes, La Rochelle, Niort, Fontenay, Loudun, Clermont, Issoire, Thiers, Tulle, Carcassonne, Nîmes, Alais, Uzès, Viviers—all had established *hôpitaux* before Colbert's death. Nor was the drive to give work to the poor limited to these institutions. Paralleling Colbert's attempt to make the monasteries of Normandy co-operate in the matter was the achievement of Father Dunod, another Jesuit and an aide of Father Chaurand, who not only founded a half dozen *hôpitaux* in that province in 1683, but also, with the aid of the

<sup>82</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fols. 326-27; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>3</sup>, 714, note 1.

<sup>83</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fols. 370-71; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 714, note 1.

intendant, created 100 workshops to give work to the poor of the countryside.<sup>84</sup>

Though the central government encouraged the municipalities to grant financial aid to the *hôpitaux* and their manufactures, its own contributions were somewhat limited. It gave some of them tax exemptions, special rights to wood from the royal forests or cheap salt, and the product of certain minor taxes, fees, and fines. It granted them the income of moribund religious foundations. But the bulk of their revenue usually came from strictly local sources. More significant was the insistence by Colbert in behalf of the state that the *hôpitaux* must establish manufactures to occupy the poor. Through the intendants, the religious, and the secular authorities, he worked for this end. By royal letters patent the manufactures of the *hôpitaux* were granted wide and valuable privileges—the right to display the royal arms, and to operate with no guild supervision, or but little of it, tax exemptions on raw materials and finished products, and free access to the status of master or journeyman for faithful teachers and workers. Occasionally, as at Bordeaux or Montpellier, industrial monopolies were granted to these manufactures.

The workshops of the *hôpitaux* usually formed an integral part of the establishment. In them, under the supervision of an officer, work was done and children or unskilled laborers taught various crafts by more or less competent teachers. Among the trades carried on were those of household work and building construction, vinegar-making, laundry, shoe-repairing, shoemaking, barrel-making, carpentry, clock-making, making of copper wire, cutlery-making, weaving, spinning, knitting, dressmaking, tapestry-making, lace-making, ribbon-weaving, soap-making, pin-making, and the manufacture of playing cards. In any given *hôpital*, there might be established only a single one of these crafts, but more often several of them were going on simultaneously.<sup>85</sup>

The number at work in an *hôpital* varied from a few dozen to thousands. In Paris, in the 1660's, 4,000 or more were sometimes working. At Bordeaux, the figure ranged from 400 to 900. At Meaux it rose to 150, at Poitiers to 2,000, at Orléans to 2,400. The total working in the *hôpitaux* in France at any given date cannot be guessed, but it may well have reached 20,000, or even more. Sometimes the *hôpital* itself supervised all stages of the work, providing instruction, equip-

<sup>84</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 123–24.

<sup>85</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 124–28.

ment, and raw materials, and selling the finished wares. More often it merely fed, lodged, and cared for the poor, and let private entrepreneurs or merchants provide the work. Sometimes the manufacture was in the hands of the municipal authorities. Sometimes the *hôpital* rented out its workers to private enterprises. In fact, the work of the poor was organized and carried on in the most diverse fashions.

Though these manufactures produced certain quantities of goods and added somewhat to the financial resources of the *hôpitaux* and to the industrial production of the country, though they trained a certain number of workers and perhaps stimulated some industries like weaving and stocking-knitting, they were subject to grave handicaps. The inmates of *hôpitaux* were, for the most part, unpromising material. Some were too old to work well; many were too young; others were more or less disabled; others were unused to work, untrained for it, or incapable of it. Despite the fact that some rewards were given for skill and energy, they were usually too small to overcome innate repugnance to work, or to induce the refractory to be amenable to discipline. A good many of the vagabonds must have labored with more than half their minds on the open road.<sup>86</sup>

In general, it can be said that the great effort to organize and rationalize poor relief and to employ the poor in the period of Colbert met with only a degree of success. The problem of the poor, far from being solved, became more intense at the turn of the century, as war and famine ravaged France. The *hôpitaux*, conceived often in the most Christian spirit of charity, were usually regarded by the unregenerate poor as an unpleasant kind of prison, and many of them came more and more to conform to this view. The whole movement bears a curious resemblance to certain aspects of the English attempts to solve similar problems, not only by the old Elizabethan Poor Law, but also by the Poor Law Amendment of 1834, repeating the one in part and in part anticipating the other. Like the English efforts, it seems to have contributed but little of lasting value toward the solution of the question of what to do with or for the poor.

#### 4. AGRICULTURE

Closely related to the problem of the poor was that of how to secure an adequate subsistence for the people of France, especially for the

<sup>86</sup> Boissonnade, *Colbert*, pp. 128-31; cf. also Rambaud, *L'Assistance publique à Poitiers, jusqu'à l'an V*, I, 459-63; Paultre, *De la répression de la mendicité*, pp. 172 ff.

lower classes, and particularly in times of short harvests. This matter was thrust upon Colbert's attention in no uncertain manner from the day he came to power, and its major aspects were etched in his mind and in his policies by the difficulties of his first two years in high office.

*Famine.*—During the first part of the seventeenth century France had suffered periodically from dearths, or famines, more or less severe. The years 1621, 1626, 1630, 1648–52, had all been marked by a shortage of grain. The harvest of 1660 was poor and it was succeeded by a still poorer one in 1661. Thus when Colbert came to power, after the arrest of Fouquet, the situation was already serious, and it soon assumed the proportions of a major famine. The shortage first became evident in Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Guyenne, where the harvest of 1661 was very much below the average. Grain prices rose rapidly and famine conditions soon spread to the provinces north of the Loire. On August 19, 1661, two weeks before Colbert replaced Fouquet, the *Parlement* of Paris adopted a typical medieval remedy. By a decree, it forbade the hoarding of grain and the formation of companies to buy grain.<sup>87</sup>

The price of grain reflected the small harvest and the famine conditions. In February, 1659, a *setier* (4.29 bushels) of wheat had cost at Paris about 13 or 14 *livres*, and the average price for the period was something like 16 to 18 *livres*. In the fall of 1661, and especially in the first half of 1662, prices of 30 *livres* a *setier* were common, while at some places for some weeks prices as high as 62 *livres* a *setier* were quoted.<sup>88</sup>

Both Louis XIV and Colbert have left accounts of the steps taken to meet the situation. The king, in his *mémoires* for the instruction of the dauphin, wrote: <sup>89</sup>

I forced the best supplied provinces to aid the others, individuals to open their shops and offer their goods for sale at a just price. I sent diligently in all directions to bring in by sea from Dantzic and other foreign countries the greatest amount of grain that I could get; I had it bought with royal funds; some I gave away, the greater part of it to the little people of the best cities, such as Paris, Rouen, Tours, and others; the rest I had sold to those who could buy it, but I set on it a very moderate price, and this profit, if there was any, was immediately used for the relief of the poor, who

<sup>87</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, p. 111; Bondoïs, "La Misère sous Louis XIV, la disette de 1662" (hereafter cited as Bondoïs' *La Misère*), p. 63.

<sup>88</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, p. 118; Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 63, 65.

<sup>89</sup> Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 61–62.



thus drew from those who were better off, by this means, aid that was voluntary, natural, and not burdensome. In the country, where distributions of grain could not be made so promptly, I gave out money, with which each person sought to relieve his own needs. Thus I appeared to my subjects like a true father of a family, who provisions his house and divides the food justly among his children and servants. I never considered any expenditure better employed than this.

While Louis XIV may not have appeared to his subjects quite so generous and paternal as he thought, still there is good reason to believe that the royal action in the economic crisis increased the respect of the people for the crown. It may well have served, in some measure, to pave the way in the popular mind for the rapid extension of the royal power that was to be such a notable feature of the ensuing years.

Colbert's account, contained in a *mémoire* written in 1663 to describe the history of the previous two years, is more detailed. In it, he attributes all the initiative and action to the king, although he himself played a major rôle. He wrote: <sup>90</sup>

Seeing the shortage of grain in his kingdom and foreseeing the misery of the poor people during the whole year, His Majesty decided to have grain bought in Poland, in Holland, in Sicily, in Africa, and everywhere else where there was any, so as to be able to provide the province of Normandy, the city of Rouen, the city of Paris, and all the provinces of the Loire River, and declared that he would rather reduce all his expenditures, even those of his own household, than fail his people on so important an occasion. His Majesty caused grain to be bought and distributed in such great quantity that from the first day of February, 1662, to the harvest, not only did he have this grain given out to all the groups and all the individuals of Paris and its environs that asked for it, but he even caused 30,000 or 40,000 pounds of bread a day to be distributed; the same thing was done in the city of Rouen and in those of the Loire River, and so abundantly that there was left over in the cities of Paris, Rouen, and Tours 16,000 *setiers*, which were not sold, because of the harvest. And one must admit that the king had no predecessor to imitate in an action so pious and so charitable, and which so displayed his paternal kindness for his peoples; and indeed it would be easy to convince oneself that he would find no subsequent imitators in such an extraordinary action; also, it brought him the blessings of heaven in such abundance that no king has ever been so respected in all Europe.

A somewhat more circumstantial account is necessary to make clear the course of the famine and of the efforts to alleviate the situation. In

<sup>90</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 52-53.

the middle of January, 1662, a committee, composed of the *prévôt des marchands* and the *échevins* of Paris, sent one of their number to Brie and Champagne to purchase grain. A decree of the Council of State of February 4, 1662, permitted this envoy to extend his operations to Châlons and other places. Another decree, dated eleven days later, exempted grain ships from the 50-sous-a-ton duty. At about the same time certain peasants and others, who had hoarded grain in the Paris area, were forced to open their granaries.

Meanwhile, the government had begun to buy grain in the eastern provinces, which had not had such a poor harvest. On February 24 a convoy of grain boats reached Rouen, but the additional supplies were not sufficient to lower prices. Gradually the situation grew worse. Reports came in that the peasants of the rural districts in the stricken areas were forced to make their daily bread out of oats, vetch, bran, and acorns. Others were reduced to eating roots, ferns, cabbage stalks, and grass.<sup>91</sup>

On March 1 a special emergency committee was formed at Paris. It included Colbert and a number of high officials of the judiciary and of the municipality. Through this organization grain was requisitioned and bought in Guyenne, Provence, and Dauphiné. Meanwhile, new areas—Burgundy, Auvergne, Blaisois, Bourbonnais, Brittany—were feeling the pinch of famine. The *Parlement* of Dijon, under pressure from the people, "who demanded it vehemently," had forbidden all hoarding of grain.<sup>92</sup>

A new group at Paris had also come into action. It was the organization of very devout and deeply religious persons, known usually as the *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement* or the *cabale des dévots*. Until his death in 1660, it had counted St. Vincent de Paul among its members. It had as its object the perfection of the moral character of its adherents, and it emphasized good works in the moral, social, political, and economic spheres as a means of attaining this end. It seems to have been active in earlier famines, especially in Champagne, and in the foundation of the *Hôpital général* of Paris. Though Colbert disliked it, as he did all groups whose motives he did not understand, and which were not directly amenable to royal control, he accepted its assistance in the terrible situation, which was rapidly growing worse. The *Compagnie*,

<sup>91</sup> Clément, *Colbert*, p. 112; Bondonis, *La Misère*, pp. 63 ff.

<sup>92</sup> Bondonis, *La Misère*, pp. 66 ff.; A. Thomas, *Une Province sous Louis XIV*, pp. 400-1.

viewed with suspicion by both the religious and the secular authorities, was forced to disband in 1666, but it seems likely that many of its members were active in the work of later groups such as the *Assemblée charitable*, which was so important in the foundation of the provincial *hôpitaux généraux*. The work of the *cabale* was carried on largely by groups of charitably minded ladies, who had been gathered together by St. Vincent de Paul.

To raise money for the hungry and the starving, the *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament* got up and sent out a circular letter, which strove to paint such a picture of conditions as would arouse the generosity of the well-to-do. It told of the superior of a Carmelite convent in Blois, who reported 3,000 hungry persons in that city, and said that their cries and lamentations penetrated even through the walls of the convent. The starving peasants of the Blois area, with wheat at 600 *livres* the *muid* (51.48 bushels), were glad to eat the putrid flesh of horses and donkeys which had starved to death. If no such victuals were available, they ate bran and water, or decayed cabbage stalks. A starving man had killed himself. Another had killed his hungry children, whom he could not feed. A man in the last stages of starvation had died when he was given a meal. Even the better-class folk were going hungry. The letter included other tales of horror and woe from Sedan, Mézières, Rocroy, and Charleville. It went on to point out the moral and social results of the famine, and to insist upon the obligation of the rich to share their plenty with the poor.

There was some response to the plea. But soon a second letter was sent out. It declared that 30,000 people were starving to death. At Blois, 267 were already dead. The situation was desperate, in wide areas. The poor, in utter want and misery, were growing black as Moors. Children were swollen from eating garbage. Contributions to ease the suffering were most urgently needed.<sup>93</sup>

To Colbert came similar reports. The intendant at Caen wrote him on March 13, 1662, that the prices there were high, the floods were adding to the difficulties, the peasants were eating roots, private charity was exhausted, disease was spreading, and some parishes were already depopulated. The intendant at Reims reported that he had been forced to send out and find food, in order to prevent riots. A doctor at Blois wrote in that disease was rampant there, that the wine trade had come

<sup>93</sup> Bondonis, *La Misère*, pp. 68 ff.

to a stop because all the cart horses had been eaten, and that a case had come to his attention in which a child, wild with hunger, had gnawed its own hands off.<sup>94</sup>

In April conditions grew still worse. The *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament* helped to form parish associations for the relief of the poor and the hungry. It was, perhaps, under the same auspices that a petition to the king, in the name of the poor of Paris, was drawn up. In rather flowery language, the poor were represented as begging the king to give them bread. The document read in part:

They have suffered a thousand ills before having recourse to Your Majesty.

Their trades have become useless to them through the notable diminution of commerce. They have sold their clothes. The shame and the fear of displaying their wretchedness to the world increases the inertia which keeps them in their rooms, where their wives and children redouble their anguish, by their cries and groans, night and day, which reduce them to despair.

The charities of the parishes, Sire, being overburdened with the sick, the infirm, and the orphans, can no longer help them. The hospitals are so full that they can receive no more. The private houses, although numerous, reduce their expenses and no longer give a livelihood to a large number of workers and artisans. They even cut down their alms for fear that they will lack bread. The country, which ought to furnish it to the cities, cries out for mercy so that bread may be brought to it. Where, then, will the poor of Paris go; what will they do; what will become of them, Sire, if Your Majesty does not have pity on them, must they not perish?

The emergency committee on grains met on April 12, 1662, with the chancellor, Séguier, presiding. Although some members urged that the grain being brought in by the king be distributed not only to Paris, but also to the environs, Colbert was able to limit the distribution to the metropolis. It was decided to sell to each head of a family a *setier* of grain at 26 *livres*, which was somewhat lower than the market price. But such sales were to be made only to persons who could produce certificates showing that they were in need. The first distribution of grain took place at the galleries of the Louvre, on April 18, after having been announced by placards. Thereafter, it went on daily from 8 to 11 A. M. and from 2 to 6 P. M. Meanwhile, all granaries and bakeshops were subjected to inspection, to prevent the illegal hoarding of grain, and agents accompanied by archers were sent out into the provinces to requisition grain. Similar distributions of grain were organized

<sup>94</sup> Bondoio, *La Misère*, pp. 72 ff.

in the larger cities, especially Rouen and Tours. As a result, the poor began to flock to them. At Tours an effort was made to raise money by charity, so as to help the poor in the small places and prevent their coming to the city.<sup>95</sup>

In some of the provinces the intendants, like de Fortia in Orléanais, attempted to gather food and help the poor. In Vendôme, when hunger began to drive the people out of the town, distributions of grain had to be organized. The charitable ladies of Paris were active in assisting officials to distribute the relief properly. When the sale of the royal grain at Paris reduced the market price there, the price of the royal grain was cut from 26 to 20 *livres*. On April 26 a decree aimed at speculators and hoarders was issued, which also forbade any person to interfere with the shipment of grain to Paris. Such provision was made necessary by the tendency of mobs, and even of city officials, in places along the routes to Paris, to try to divert to local use the grain passing through.<sup>96</sup>

Despite the beneficial effects of the sale of the royal grain, it was insufficient in amount, and the situation was still serious. On April 21 a big meeting of all the important judicial and legal officials was held, at the king's suggestion, to discuss ways of making the grain go further, of preventing the formation of crowds, and of stopping the spread of disease. Price-fixing and dozens of other suggestions were discussed. As a result of the meeting, a special attempt was made to keep the city clean; religious communities, pastry cooks, and others were permitted to make and sell bread, despite any objections that the bakers might raise; and speculation in, and resale of grain was forbidden.

A statement drawn up at the end of April showed that the government had brought in 676 *setiers* of grain from Guyenne and Brittany, and much larger quantities from abroad. But after the momentary recession, prices rose again until wheat was selling at 50 *livres* a *setier* and bread at 8 *sous* the pound. By May the purchase and distribution of wheat were on a fairly regular basis. Wheat, for example, was sent from Bordeaux to Havre and thence to Paris, Rouen, and Touraine. Before the middle of the month, at least 9 ships, carrying 6,000 *setiers*, had been dispatched from Bordeaux, and the shipments continued throughout the month.

<sup>95</sup> Bondonis, *La Misère*, pp. 72 ff.; for the petition of the poor, see "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 108, fol. 542.

<sup>96</sup> Bondonis, *La Misère*, pp. 78-86.

In Rouen the *lieutenant-général* of that city issued a public notice on the distribution of royal grain. He explained that the king was bringing in grain to forestall "the famine and to relieve the misery of his poorest subjects." Some of this grain was to be sold in Rouen at low prices every day, at the convent of the Carmelites. The grain would be sold to the "poorest persons" at 16 *livres* the *mine* (half of a *setier*). Poor persons bearing certificates as to their status from their parish priest were to be allowed to purchase from half a *boisseau* (the *boisseau* was  $\frac{1}{12}$  of a *setier*) to a *mine*. The certificates of the priests were to indicate the amount of wheat each person needed. Bakers were forbidden to try to get any of the royal grain.<sup>97</sup>

In other sections, though relief was gradually organized, conditions were very bad. The soldiers quartered in Auvergne were reported to be ragged and hungry. The *élections* of Châteauroux and Issoudun were in great misery, though some wheat was coming to them from La Marche. Five hundred persons had died at Valençay. The merchants of Orléans were profiteering; there was rioting there, and a granary was pillaged. Blois was hoarding grain, at the expense of other places like Amboise.<sup>98</sup>

In Paris, during May, the distribution of grain was further developed. In addition to selling the royal grain below the market price, arrangements were made to give some of it to the very poor. A list showing the needs of each parish was prepared and given to the king, who turned it over to Colbert. Some parishes asked for only a *muid* (12 *setiers*) or two. That of Saint-Nicolas des Champs asked for 8, "because of the great number of poor" that it had. The actual distribution, and quite probably the investigation of the needs, was in the hands of the associations of "charitable ladies," who in turn were organized and directed by the *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament*.

The effort to reduce the price of bread at Paris by allowing persons other than bakers to make it had not been a success. The government therefore took a more drastic step. Hiring journeymen bakers to do the work, it went into the baking business. Beginning May 10, bread was sold to all comers, without questions as to needs, at the Tuileries. It was passed out through four windows to the people, who gathered in such

<sup>97</sup> Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 86 ff.; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 108, fol. 591 ff.; No. 109, fols. 17-21.

<sup>98</sup> Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 91-93; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 108, fols. 316-18, 686-87, and *passim*.

crowds that barriers had to be set up to make them get in line. The bread was "good and white," and the bakers fiercely resented this competition. They sought to retaliate by reducing their operations so as to increase the shortage. But the government replied by sending inspectors to the bakeshops to make the bakers bake.<sup>99</sup>

Despite all the relief work, the situation continued to be serious. Grain intended for Touraine and Brittany had to be used at Orléans. Prices at Paris remained high, and even rose. The citizens of Blois seized grain convoys that were passing the city. June, however, saw a rapid amelioration, though it was necessary to continue the distribution of the royal wheat. There were riots at Amboise, but the intendant was able to reduce the price of the king's grain in Touraine to 26 *livres* a *setier* on June 5. Prices fell rapidly at Paris. To meet the royal competition, the bakers cut the price of a pound of bread to 2 *sous*, 5 *deniers*. Thereupon the price of the royal bread was reduced to 2 *sous*. The bakers met the cut, and the sale of royal bread dwindled. In agreement with Colbert, the *Parlement* ordered the poor who had flocked to Paris, cared for in the *Hôpital général*, but it was provided that they must be sent back to the country before the harvest.<sup>100</sup>

By July, to Colbert's intense satisfaction, large quantities of wheat were coming into Paris, and the crisis was over. By August 8, practically all the royal wheat there had been sold, though more was still coming in. In Tours the winding up of the royal distributions encountered certain difficulties. In July the royal wheat was being sold at 23 *livres* the *setier*, but the bakers refused to buy it, even though they had to pay 24 or 26 *livres* in the regular markets, for they feared that if they took advantage of the cheap grain they would be forced to reduce their bread prices. At the end of July plans were being made to cut the price of the royal wheat to 20 *livres* or even 18 *livres*, in order to dispose of it. At that time the records showed that some 16,800 *setiers* of royal grain had come to Tours. Of this 2,300 *setiers* had been sent on to other places; 2,000 *setiers* had been sold at 26 *livres*; and 3,836 *setiers* at 23 *livres*. There remained 8,664 *setiers*.<sup>101</sup>

The harvest of 1662 was not very good. It was particularly poor in Anjou. But it was sufficient to put an end to the famine conditions. The

<sup>99</sup> Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 93-98; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 108, fol. 541.

<sup>100</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 109 *bis*, fol. 174; Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 99 ff.

<sup>101</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 109, fols. 103-5, 1045-49; Bondoïs, *La Misère*, pp. 106 ff.

harvest of 1663 was also poor, and in August of that year Colbert recommended new purchases of grain by the king. There was want during these years, and some suffering, but nothing like a renewal of the terrible situation of the spring of 1662. The remaining harvests of the 1660's were better. In fact, that of 1668 was so heavy that there was not sufficient space in the granaries to store it, and a good deal of the grain spoiled. In the ensuing years there were occasional shortages. In 1683, for example, the price of grain rose so high, in the area around Tours, that the peasants were forced to eat bread made of bran and beans, and Nointel, the intendant, had to ease the situation by bringing in Dantzic wheat from Nantes. From 1663, however, till his death twenty years later, Colbert never had to face a real famine, or even a dearth that was other than local and temporary. Not that the threat of famine was ended, for the 1690's were to see the situation of 1662 repeated with such intensity that a certain Dr. Retis was sent out under royal auspices to teach the peasants to eat roots. It seems merely that Colbert, through good luck or good management, did not have to contend with a serious food shortage in the last two decades of his ministry.<sup>102</sup>

But the one famine which he did encounter, coming as it did in his first months of office, and confronting him with desperately urgent and difficult problems that demanded a rapid solution, left an indelible impression on Colbert's mind. It is only in the light of the famine of 1662 that Colbert's grain policy can be understood, for it was compounded of precedent and of fear of another famine. Nor were these ingredients alien to each other, for the earlier French policy had been, in good part, motivated by a desire to prevent a grain shortage.

It must also be remembered that a famine was unwelcome to Colbert because of its secondary as well as its immediate effects. It disrupted the internal economy, whereas Colbert had a passion for "good order." It reduced the population, which he was striving to increase. It made difficult the collection of taxes in the stricken areas, and taxes were ever of prime importance to him. It necessitated the export of money to buy grain, while much of his work was devoted to the prevention of such exports. Furthermore, in a country so largely agricultural as France, a bad harvest was likely, if not sure, to bring about a general depression,

<sup>102</sup> Bondoio, *La Misère*, pp. 54 ff., 115 ff.; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 518, letter from Nointel to Colbert, May 9, 1683; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1637, journal du Sieur Retis, and so forth, dated July 7, 1699.



or recession in business, and Colbert was always anxious to increase prosperity.<sup>103</sup> On the other hand, Colbert was also ever ready to permit the export of grain, if it seemed safe and wise to do so, for such export brought money into the country, facilitated the collection of taxes, and stimulated business.

*Colbert's grain policy.*—From 1500 to 1559 the grain policy of the French government consisted of scattered attempts at regulation, some to vindicate royal control over the grain trade, some to raise money by the grant of licenses for export, some to prohibit export so as to prevent famine, and some to permit export so as to dispose of crop surpluses. An edict of 1539 declared interprovincial trade in grain free, and the government in the ensuing two centuries sometimes chose to act as if this edict and similar enactments were really in force. Actually, long after Colbert's death there were all sorts of barriers to free internal trade in grain in France.

From 1559 to 1571 a serious effort was made, on paper, to provide adequate regulation for the grain trade. One edict actually made provision for a commission, which was to have complete charge of the matter. But in actuality, the commission functioned but for a short time, and the policy of the period may be summarized as an attempt to regularize the system of permitting export in good years and forbidding it in bad ones, and to secure adequate information on which to base such actions. Many of the regulations had a clearly fiscal intent behind them.<sup>104</sup>

In the next ninety years, down to 1661, there were repeated enactments on the grain trade, e.g., 1573, 1574, 1587, 1595, 1601, 1604, 1625, 1629, 1631, 1639, 1642, 1643, 1648, 1649, 1655. But there was little new in policy. Export was permitted after abundant harvests, forbidden when there were signs of dearth. Attempts were occasionally made to raise money from the exports, through duties or licenses. The provision of the General Ordinance of 1629 is typical. It says:

Henceforth the export of grain and wine shall not be permitted, unless we are duly informed by our local and municipal officials that our provinces are sufficiently supplied. With this in view, the farms of the export duties shall be let out, with the reservation of the right to permit or to prohibit export, as is deemed expedient.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Eon, *Le Commerce honorable*, pp. 107-8.

<sup>104</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 223-31.

<sup>105</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 236-39.

Such was the grain-trade policy to which Colbert was heir. An edict of December 2, 1661, not many weeks after he took office, forbade the export of grain because of the domestic shortage, and reiterated the semimythological freedom of internal trade. The export of grain seems to have remained under ban, through the famine and during the ensuing years when there was still fear of a renewed dearth. But by the spring of 1669, the heavy crop of the previous year had altered the situation. On May 20, as a result of Colbert's advice, a decree of the Council of State permitted the export of grain, so that "the abundance of this grain may be more useful and advantageous" to the people. But with a backward glance at the famine and a forward glance at the possibility of a short harvest in the summer of 1669, Colbert introduced a new safeguard. The permission to export was limited to a few months. It was to lapse on October 1. Moved by his desire to secure markets for the surplus grain and thus to bring in money and increase prosperity, Colbert introduced another innovation in policy into the decree, for it was provided that no export duties were to be collected on the grain sent out of the country—a sacrifice of fiscal for general ends, and a real encouragement to export.<sup>106</sup>

This policy of duty-free export was prolonged, for a large part of France, by decrees of September 29, 1669; March 18 and August 31, 1670; and so forth. But decrees of December 31, 1671, and October 26, 1672, while prolonging the permission to export, provided that one-half the regular duties should be paid. A special decree of March 6, 1672, reduced the taxes on the export of grain from Picardy, Champagne, and French Flanders to one-fourth of the regular duties. But each renewal of permission to export was limited in duration, and Colbert kept anxious watch on the grain supply, so as to be able to stop exports at the first threat of dearth. For example, on August 10, 1670, ten days before the renewals were to lapse, he wrote the intendants asking for information as to the harvest and the price of grain, so that the king might know whether to extend the permission to export. As a further safeguard, in some of the renewals, the right to export was restricted to certain provinces. That of September 29, 1669, for instance, applied only to Poitou, Touraine, Anjou, Normandy, Picardy, Soissonais, Champagne, Burgundy, Bourbonnais, Auvergne, and Berry.

<sup>106</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 272, 274; "Manuscrits français," No. 16,740, fol. 275; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 593; Du Frêne de Francheville, *Histoire générale . . . des finances*, I, 240.

In the continuations of December 31, 1671, and October 26, 1672, the exemptions from export duty were reduced to half, probably because the surplus of grain was less than in the previous years. But export was again made duty-free, for the area of the "five big farms," by a decree of April 25, 1673. That the policy met with some local opposition is indicated by a decree of May 10, 1672, allowing the continued export of grain, despite a prohibitory decree by the *Parlement* of Provence.<sup>107</sup>

While the French crops were good, Colbert was glad to limit imports of grain. On December 26, 1670, he told the intendant of Dijon not to hesitate to levy a 30 percent duty on wheat from Franche Comté since France had plenty of it, and importation must be prevented. Two weeks earlier he had written the intendant at Bordeaux, lamenting the fact that good crops all over Europe had decreased the foreign market for French grain. It was not proper, he supposed, however, to hope for bad harvests in the other countries. The motives behind Colbert's policy during these years are clearly set forth in a letter to the intendant of Tours, dated June 23, 1673. In it he referred to the renewal of the permission for duty-free export of the previous April, and said: <sup>108</sup>

The favor that the king has done his people, in permitting them to send out their grain without paying any duties, had as its purpose to attract money from foreign lands into the kingdom. And as the flour made in Anjou and transported into Brittany does not attract money from foreign lands into the kingdom, you can without difficulty allow the duties to be levied on the flour, which is not included in the decree. But as regards grain, you should see that the people enjoy in its entirety the favor granted to them.

In 1674, by decrees of April 19 and September 4, the exemption from export duties was withdrawn, not so much to decrease the export as to increase the royal revenue on account of the Dutch war. In the following years there was an alternation of prohibitions of export, and permissions to export, depending largely on Colbert's view of the amount of grain in France. He was determined to prevent a shortage, yet extremely desirous of selling French grain abroad whenever it was safe to do so. Prohibitions of export were issued on July 6, 1675; September 11, October 6, and October 30, 1677; May 16, 1679; and June 24, 1681. General permission to export was granted December 31,

<sup>107</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 272-75; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 232; II<sup>2</sup>, 667; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,039, pp. 74, 75, 76; Du Fre'ne de Francheville, *Histoire générale . . . des finances*, I, 240-41.

<sup>108</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 596, note 1; IV, 262.

1675; June 4, 1678; June 1, 1680; and August 7, 1683. There were, in addition, other decrees which forbade or permitted exports from certain sections of France, e.g., those of July 6, 1677; July 23, 1678; January 7, 1679; and July 11, 1679.<sup>109</sup>

How Colbert watched the situation and determined his policy may be indicated by a few letters from his voluminous correspondence on the subject. On March 16, 1674, he wrote to the intendant at Bordeaux, to tell him that the prospects for the next harvest were so good and there was so much grain in the kingdom that the king thought it unnecessary to restrict the export, and that grain might be shipped out freely. On December 7, 1674, he wrote again to the same intendant explaining that while there was so much grain in the granaries that people were complaining of the low prices, and while the king was allowing entire freedom in the export of grain, still a great deal of grain had been sent out, and prices were beginning to go up. The intendant was therefore to watch the prices, and to compare them with those of good, bad, and average years, "so that His Majesty can judge by these comparative prices whether for the good of his people and so as not to create for them a shortage of grain, he should forbid the export or continue the permission to send it out." As a matter of fact, on July 6, 1675, at the first signs of a deficient harvest, export was prohibited. But the prohibition was removed on the last day of the year, as soon as it was clear that no shortage was to be feared.<sup>110</sup>

Early in the fall of 1677 there were reports of a scarcity of grain, especially in the northwest. On September 3 Colbert wrote Le Blanc, the intendant at Rouen, to inquire into the matter. The king had heard, he declared, that certain provinces were exporting large quantities of grain to Spain and Italy, where famine conditions existed, and he feared lest this "cause some famine, or a considerable increase in the price of grain in these provinces." The intendant was to find out how much grain was being sent out from Havre and other ports, how much had gone out in July and August, what plans there were for future shipments, how well the granaries were stocked, and how much more grain could be sent out without causing a rise in prices. After Le Blanc had reported, the king would decide what to do. The intendant might do well to bruit

<sup>109</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 272-75; Du Fre'ne der Francheville, *Histoire g'e'n'e'rale . . . des finances*, I, 241-43.

<sup>110</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 686, note 1; Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, p. 275.

his instructions about, so as to prevent people from using conditions in Italy or Spain as an excuse for raising prices.<sup>111</sup>

Apparently as the result of a report from Le Blanc, a decree was issued on September 11, forbidding the export of grain, so as to "maintain abundance in the kingdom" and "to prevent the foreigners from continuing to buy it" and thus aiding the enemies of France. The next day Colbert wrote Le Blanc, informing him of the decree and directing him to enforce it, since it was very important. On September 24 he wrote again to say that he was glad the intendant had published the decree. He ~~was~~ was to enforce it with care, and to report every two weeks on the price of grain, as compared with previous years. But he was not to be misled by people who strove to exaggerate their misery. Again in November Colbert wrote two letters urging Le Blanc to enforce the decree strictly and to prevent all attempts to evade it.<sup>112</sup>

The prohibition was kept in force till June 4, 1678, when it was revoked by a decree. But even before this date Colbert was easing its application somewhat. In April, 1678, he sent to Daguesseau, intendant of Languedoc, passports permitting the export of limited quantities of grain. On May 3 Daguesseau wrote him that the crop prospects were so favorable that it might be wise to lift the ban on exports entirely. If such a decree were issued, the intendant said, he would not publish it unless the situation were favorable and unless the limited exports of grain had had no untoward effects. On May 14, on Colbert's advice and apparently as a result of Daguesseau's suggestion, a decree was issued permitting the export of grain from Languedoc, on the grounds that there was no reason to fear a shortage and that such export would bring into the province money wherewith to pay taxes. On June 1 Daguesseau wrote that he had received and published the decree, that it was very important to allow the export of grain "so as to bring some money into the province," and that he would watch carefully to see if any new precautions against shortage should be taken.<sup>113</sup>

Three days later the decree was made general, but Colbert was anxious that there should not be too great exports. On September 24, 1678, he wrote to Le Blanc:

<sup>111</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,751, fol. 203; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 270.

<sup>112</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 797, p. 129; "Manuscripts français," No. 8,751, fols. 215, 217, 230, 232; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 271.

<sup>113</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 295, letters from Daguesseau to Colbert, May 3, June 1, 1678; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 853.

The wheat famine existing in Spain and Italy giving reason to believe that the French merchants and even the Dutch will take a great quantity of wheat from all the provinces of the kingdom, the king orders me to tell you that, although there is nothing more advantageous than the export of grain, which would inevitably attract a great deal of money into the provinces, nevertheless, since it might come to pass, through the avidity of the merchants, that the same famine which is now present in foreign countries, would in a short time come into this one, His Majesty wishes that you investigate carefully and report to me whether there is a quantity of grain, both of preceding years and of the present one, in the granaries of the area of the generality of Rouen, and whether much of it is going out by the ports of Havre, Dieppe, Harfleur, and others of that coast, so that His Majesty may stop the export when you think proper.<sup>114</sup>

In the fall of 1678 a new enactment stopped or restricted the export of grain, at least from Languedoc, for on November 19 Daguesseau was asking for passports to permit the Compagnie de Cette to send out 6,150 *setiers*, which had been already loaded aboard ships before news of the ban arrived. On February 17, 1679, Colbert sent the intendant passports allowing the export of 100,000 *setiers* of grain. But he appended a few pointed remarks on the subject, saying:

I am glad to call to your attention on this subject that it would have been much better to allow complete freedom of export than to make use of the passport method, because it is subject to a great number of inconveniences which can eventuate in annoying results, and among others, that since the motives which cause the granting of passports are not known, it is almost impossible that powerful persons, whom the king could scarcely refuse, should not make use of the example of these passports to ask for others, and to get money for them; and this is something to be carefully avoided, so that if you can possibly abstain from using these passports, and if you feel that complete freedom can be allowed, you will do very well to let me know about it and I will immediately send you a decree to remove the prohibitions, and I am the more persuaded that this is possible, in that the length and the coldness of the winter should make us hope for a good and prosperous year.<sup>115</sup>

On May 5, 1679, Colbert wrote the intendants, asking for news of the crop prospects. There were fears, he said, for the coming harvest. Two days later Breteuil, the intendant at Amiens, replied that the price of grain was high. He felt that there was no real reason for it, since

<sup>114</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,751, fol. 363.

<sup>115</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 295, letter from Daguesseau to Colbert, November 19, 1678; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1, Colbert to Daguesseau, February 17, 1679.

the drought had not yet endangered the crops, but people were holding back their grain to see if prices would rise further. No grain to speak of was being exported. Yet some poor women at Doullens had tried to stop the shipment of a few sacks of grain. They said that they were starving. The same thing had happened the previous week at Saint-Valéry. "However," he concluded, "since according to your way of thinking, too great precautions cannot be taken in such cases, my advice would be to forbid the export abroad by land or sea."<sup>116</sup> Perhaps the report from Amiens recalled the difficulties of 1662 to Colbert. At any rate, a general prohibition of the export of grain was issued just a few days later.

On June 7, 1679, Colbert was writing the intendant at Toulouse that the crop promised to be satisfactory, but that the king did not wish to remove the export ban, since it was bad policy to make too frequent changes in such an important matter. Two weeks later he wrote Daguesseau, ordering him to stop illegal exports of grain, since there were grounds for fearing a bad harvest. By the end of another month Colbert was hopeful again, for he wrote Le Blanc on July 26, "It seems to me that the grain being fine in the provinces of the kingdom, not only shall we be able to do without foreign grain, but a considerable quantity of it might well go out of the kingdom to attract money to it." In August permission to export was granted, but it was suspended almost at once. By December Colbert was giving orders to an agent to manipulate the price of grain at Reims, so as to keep it down, or to arrange to bake bread for distribution to the poor.<sup>117</sup>

Thus each year, with alternate hopes of securing money for the country and fears of producing a famine, Colbert watched the harvest, sought information, and regulated the export of grain. The story in 1680 was much the same, yet different in its outcome. On the first of February Colbert wrote Daguesseau that the request of the Estates for permission to export grain seemed ridiculous, since there was a famine in Provence, Dauphiné, and Burgundy, and any surplus grain should be sent there. But in March he allowed Languedoc to export grain, and Daguesseau published the decree immediately, on the grounds that there was going to be a very large wheat crop in part, at least, of the province.

<sup>116</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 84, letter from Breteuil to Colbert, May 9, 1679; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 273-74.

<sup>117</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 663; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 273-77; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,752, fol. 107.

On June 1 the permission to export grain was made general. Twelve days later Colbert sent the decree to the intendants, and ordered them to publish it, "provided that a good harvest seems certain to you, and that there is nothing to fear in regard to nourishment and food for the people."<sup>118</sup>

In 1681 the process was the same, but the result was more like that of 1679. On May 15 Colbert wrote the intendants, asking them for crop reports every two weeks. A month later he wrote them again, saying that the harvest might be affected by the drought. They were to keep a careful eye on prices and report, so that the king might know whether to forbid exports or not. On June 24 a decree forbidding export was actually issued, and two days later Colbert sent it out to the intendants. From Rouen Le Blanc wrote Colbert that there was an abundance of grain and prices were going down. On July 24, therefore, Colbert authorized him to suspend publication of the decree. He wrote the same day to the intendant at Bordeaux, saying, "Since you have found the harvest very abundant, you must not publish the decree I sent you forbidding the export of grain, and it is to be hoped that the people can sell their grain and get some money from it."<sup>119</sup>

General permission to export grain was not renewed till August 7, 1683, a few weeks before Colbert's death. In the years thereafter his policy was followed almost religiously. Prohibitions in poor years alternated with freedom to export, though prohibitions were much more frequent in the 1690's, when there were a number of crop failures. From 1686 to 1689 not only was export allowed, but in line with the precedent set by Colbert, exports of grain were exempted from duties.<sup>120</sup>

Colbert's contributions to the grain policy of France consisted in something more than the idea of exemption from export duties, and the limitation to a short period of the permissions to export. He took the traditional policy that had been built up in a desultory fashion for more than a century, and made it an actual, rather than a paper, program. Partly this was due to his attempt strictly to enforce the prohibitions of export in bad years, and to encourage exports in good years. More important was his effort to make his policy conform to existing

<sup>118</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 713; IV, 278, 279-80; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 295, Daguesseau to Colbert, March 29, 1679; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,752, fol. 252.

<sup>119</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 284, note 2; II<sup>1</sup>, 162; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,752, fols. 450, 768-69.

<sup>120</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, p. 275, note 4.



conditions. To do this, he had to insist on more and more frequent reports from the intendants. Whereas his predecessors had been wont to legislate on the basis of rumors and suppositions, he strove to secure a constant flow of information that would make his policy realistic. As the correspondence quoted above shows, this information enabled him to vary his policy for special areas. A blanket prohibition could be eased by the grant of passports, by not publishing the ban in a given area, or by granting special permission for exports from a given province. A blanket grant of freedom of export could be restricted in similar fashion. While some latitude was allowed the intendants in the matter, their acts had to be confirmed from Paris, and Colbert insisted on being kept posted with up-to-the-minute data. By the time of his death, some, at least, of the intendants had learned to report voluntarily and to watch conditions closely. Basville, for example, wrote in, on April 10, 1683:

The price of grain is not increasing and is even decreasing a little. This decrease comes from the hope of a more abundant year than the last one.<sup>121</sup>

A. P. Usher, the author of the best work on the French grain trade, says of this phase of Colbert's work:

The persistent efforts of Colbert, his ceaseless criticism of inadequate reports, his constant emphasis upon the importance of full information created precedents which gathered headway gradually and finally bore fruit in the fulness of the reports and letters of the period 1683-1715.<sup>122</sup>

Yet no part of Colbert's policy has been subjected to more persistent criticism than his efforts in regard to the grain trade. The Physiocrats, in the eighteenth century, spent a great deal of time reviling Colbert for his restrictions on the export of grain, and comparing him unfavorably to Sully, to whom they attributed, with practically no foundation, certain free-trade notions. Other eighteenth-century writers joined in the outcry. Forbonnais declared that Colbert's restrictions on the export of grain kept its price down in France, prevented the prosperity of the agricultural classes, and impaired the success of the rest of his work. Voltaire declared, "It is the only stain on his ministry: it is a great one." The writers of the nineteenth century, even more thoroughly imbued with laissez faire notions, were almost unanimous in their denunciation

<sup>121</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 449, Basville to Colbert, April 10, 1683; Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 270-72.

<sup>122</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, p. 271.

of Colbert's grain policy. Even Clément, who devoted his life to a study of this minister of Louis XIV and who came to hold for him a very real admiration, attributed the misery of the agricultural population to the prohibition of the export of grain, and quoted with approval the derogatory views of other writers. Most twentieth-century writers have followed in the footsteps of their predecessors and condemned Colbert's grain policy. Bondois, the careful author of many recent and excellent monographs on the period of Colbert, remarks, "The protectionist theory, essential principle of Colbertism, was especially regrettable in connection with the grain trade."<sup>123</sup>

Part of the objection to Colbert's grain policy has flowed from an incomplete understanding of the extent to which he was merely applying precedents of long standing. Part of it has arisen from a misconception—that Colbert encouraged and perpetuated the trade barriers between provinces, whereas actually he ignored them, or strove to break them down, because of his persistent sense of national unity.<sup>124</sup> Part of it has arisen from a second misconception—that Colbert deliberately tried to keep the price of grain down, for the benefit of the cities, the industrial classes, and the army, whereas it is easy to show that his motives and aims were quite different—a passionate desire to prevent famines, and a consistent wish to bring money into the country through grain exports, whenever it was safe to do so.

But most of the obloquy cast upon Colbert for his efforts in behalf of the grain trade has been due to the widespread *laissez faire* notions dating from the eighteenth century. According to these ideas, the proper thing for Colbert to have done was to have made export free at all times. Then, it has been argued, the French peasants would have gotten a good price for their grain. The steady market for grain would have encouraged the tilling of more soil, and the use of better agricultural methods. The resulting increase in production would have banished the fear of famine forever. Even if these views were sound, it might be argued that in light of them Colbert should be praised not damned, since he did more than any of his predecessors to encourage the export of grain. But there is some question as to the complete validity of the *laissez faire* point of view.

<sup>123</sup> Forbonnais, *Recherches . . . sur les finances*, I, 292-93; Voltaire, *Le siècle de Louis XIV*, II, 91-93; Clément, *Colbert*, p. 278, and *passim*; Bondois, *La Misère*, pp. 55-56, 116-17.

<sup>124</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 276-77.

It is hard to be dispassionate upon the subject. But an objective approach would probably include certain considerations such as these: Would popular and official feeling at the time, especially in view of the experiences of 1662, have countenanced complete freedom of export? Would not public pressure, in times of threatened famine, have forced the prohibition of export, even against the wishes of Colbert? Are there any grounds for the belief that writers, arguing upon a theoretical basis, a century or more after the event, reached a more just conclusion than a well-informed administrator of the time? Is it possible that though the *laissez faire* views may have been appropriate in the years after 1750, they did not fit the period of Colbert? Is it certain that freedom to export grain would greatly have increased agricultural production? Is it not possible that in years of uneven crops it was better to prohibit export and to try to redistribute the grain within the kingdom, than to let certain provinces export their surpluses and force others to import from abroad? Is it clear that in such cases supplies from abroad could have arrived in time to prevent great suffering? Does not the experience of 1662 point to the opposite conclusion? Is it certain that with existing seventeenth-century techniques of agricultural production and of transportation, any policy could have precluded the danger of famine?

Only if most or all of these questions can be answered in a sense contrary to Colbert's policy and with some assurance, does it seem entirely proper to condemn his efforts outright. The halfway view, that in the historical setting, Colbert could not have acted otherwise than he did, is probably to some degree sound. Even the contrary view, that Colbert's policy was wise, adapted to the existing conditions, and so designed as to produce good results, would seem to have more than a partial validity.

Not all Colbert's work in connection with grain was limited to his treatment of the grain trade as a whole, or to his periodic prohibition of exports. On the one hand, he was anxious to increase the production of grain by decreasing taxes and by reducing the severity of their collection, and by discouraging the production of tobacco and other crops on land suited to wheat.<sup>125</sup> On the other hand, he strove to regulate the internal grain trade, to solve the wheat problems of the provinces, and to see that one province relieved the needs of another.

<sup>125</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, p. 380; "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 109 bis, fols. 103-5; Colbert, *Lettres*, II, 95, and *passim*; IV, *passim*.

Indeed Colbert's work in connection with the grain trade of the various provinces illustrates and reënforces many of the policies he applied in the national sphere. Burgundy was one of the bread baskets of France. In 1671 Colbert sought to find an outlet for the surplus grain of the province by cutting the tolls on the Rhône in half, so as to encourage export to Languedoc, Provence, and Italy. Picardy and Champagne, also large grain-producing areas, were encouraged to export grain by a reduction in export duties (1672) and by exemption from a general prohibition of exports (1676). On the whole, the intendants were allowed considerable discretion in regulating the local grain trade. They could forbid export temporarily, and they could suspend the publication of decrees or edicts of national scope, if local conditions seemed to demand such a step.

At Bordeaux, in 1663, local authorities sought to restrict the export of grain. The merchants appealed to Colbert, and he ordered an investigation of the rights of the local officials in the matter, which showed that they had exceeded their authority. Colbert's aim was to secure an adequate outlet down the Garonne for the grain of Languedoc, while at the same time assuring Bordeaux a sufficient supply. When local conditions seemed to justify it, he was prepared to exempt Bordeaux from the operation of the prohibitions of export (1675, 1681, 1682).

Languedoc offered a special problem, for though Lower Languedoc was normally self-sufficient, and Upper Languedoc usually had a surplus of grain for export to Spain and Italy, still in times of poor harvests it was necessary for Upper Languedoc to succor Provence, Lower Languedoc, and other parts of France. In 1678-79 Colbert had to see that Languedoc sent grain to Provence, instead of exporting it to Italy, and he was delighted when his measures produced good results. In 1680, with Colbert's consent, the intendant suspended the publication of an edict permitting export, so as to force Upper Languedoc to come to the rescue of Lower Languedoc, where the crop had been very bad. In general, it may be said, Colbert's work in the provincial grain trade was merely an attempt to adjust his national policies on grain to local conditions.<sup>128</sup>

*Tobacco, hemp, cheese, and other farm products.*—In addition to his especial and almost exaggerated interest in grain, Colbert gave some

<sup>128</sup> Usher, *The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710*, pp. 277-94; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 271-72, and *passim*.

heed to a variety of other farm products. For the sake of the West Indies and to make the operation of the tobacco monopoly in France easier, he was anxious to restrict the growing of tobacco to certain areas. He tried repeatedly to stop tobacco growing in Normandy, and to delimit the region in which it was raised near Bordeaux and Montauban. But as a result of the hindrance to commerce during the Dutch war, the amount of tobacco produced in France increased rapidly in 1676, 1677, and 1678. In general, Colbert would have preferred to see land used for wheat or some other food crop. For motives largely connected with the tobacco monopoly, the policy of restricting the area under tobacco in France was continued long after Colbert's death.<sup>127</sup>

Quite different was his attitude towards hemp, for hemp was a product essential to naval and commercial strength, and useful for some branches of the textile industry. Moreover, it was imported not from French colonies, but from foreign countries like Italy or Sweden. In May, 1670, Colbert ordered the naval arsenal at Toulon to use French hemp, rather than that from Piedmont. France was producing plenty of hemp for naval needs, he claimed. In August he ordered an official at Havre to buy for the navy French not foreign hemp, "so as to force the subjects to cultivate all that is to be used by the navy." Three months later he wrote the intendant at Moulins that he was prepared to buy for the navy 300,000 or 400,000 pounds of hemp in Bourbonnais each year. In 1671 Colbert laid it down as an axiom that hemp for the navy should always be bought in France, maintaining that if this were done, enough would "infallibly" be sown in France. In 1672 Colbert further reënforced his stand by insisting that even if hemp from Piedmont were better and cheaper than that from Dauphiné or Burgundy, still the French product was to be preferred for the navy. So interested was Colbert in hemp culture that he even started its cultivation on some of his own estates.<sup>128</sup>

Colbert also displayed some interest in French cheese production. In 1670, for example, he was glad to announce that the 30-percent duty which had been laid on goods from Franche Comté, would keep out the

<sup>127</sup> G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1893, report on tobacco sales, 1679; "Manuscripts français," No. 8,751, fols. 52-53, 56-57, 193-94; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 131, *mémoire* on tobacco, August 3, 1680; AD XI, No. 48, *liasse* 2, decrees of January 25, 1676; March 14, 1676; February 6, 1677; October 3, 1676, and so on; "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fol. 250.

<sup>128</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, III<sup>e</sup>, 239-40, 469-70; II<sup>e</sup>, 578, note 1; III<sup>e</sup>, 46-63.

cheeses from that territory, which had been coming in duty-free and competing with those made in France. In 1683 the sale of cheeses from Auvergne seemed to be declining, and Colbert wrote to the intendant, anxiously inquiring the causes of the decrease and ordering him to investigate the matter.<sup>129</sup>

To Colbert wine production was of considerable significance, since as an article of export it brought a good deal of money into the country. He closely watched the production and shipments of wine in the Bordeaux area, for it was thence that wine was sent to England, Holland, and all northern Europe. In November, 1673, for instance, he wrote to the intendant of Bordeaux, saying that he was glad "that there has not been such a great abundance of wines in the generality of Bordeaux; since they are of better quality, the exports of them will be greater, individuals will sell them better, and will receive more advantages than last year." From officials at Bordeaux, Colbert repeatedly demanded statistics on wine exports; and to encourage the sale of French wine abroad he was even willing to allow it to be adulterated to suit the Scandinavian taste. In 1672 he reduced the export duties on wine, to meet the situation caused by barring the Dutch from the carrying trade. Despite his interest in wine, however, Colbert disapproved of raising too much of it. He would rather have seen the land devoted to grain, or other more useful crops.<sup>130</sup>

To increase the production in France of the raw materials from which textiles were made was a persistent wish of Colbert. He strove valiantly to improve the quality and enlarge the quantity of wool raised in France. He sought to introduce flax culture into new areas in France, and to increase it where it was established. In 1670, like his predecessor Laffemas, Colbert was encouraging attempts to raise silkworms in Normandy, and the next year he was toying with the idea of substituting mulberries and silkworms for the vines and wines of one of the grape-growing areas of Burgundy. In the same year he displayed interest in a project to establish cotton as a crop in Provence, though he was unwilling to grant a special privilege, if cotton was already being raised there.<sup>131</sup>

Sometimes Colbert's work in connection with the gardens of the royal chateaux involved him in agriculture matters. In 1673, for example, he

<sup>129</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 157; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 101, letter from Bercy to Colbert, July 3, 1683.

<sup>130</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 682, 667; IV, 277, note 2.

<sup>131</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>e</sup>, 615, 624, 627; IV, 233-34, and *passim*.

was elaborately endeavoring to secure 10,000 jonquil bulbs for the king, without paying too high a price for them, and without alienating the bulb-growers by keeping the price down through the use of royal authority. Sometimes Colbert's interest in agriculture led him into vain dreams and hopes. In 1670 he asked a director of the West India Company to send him plants and seeds from the islands. He was especially anxious to secure some pineapples, so as to see if they could be grown in France.<sup>132</sup>

*Horse-raising.*—One phase of agriculture excited an almost devoted attention in Colbert. It was the raising of horses, and it interested him from several points of view. In the first place, horses were most useful beasts on the farm, or in the army, or in the transportation of goods and people. In the second place, if horse raising could be made profitable, it would bring money into sections of the country which might have little chance of securing it from other sources. In the third place, many of the best horses in France were imported, especially from Germany. As long as this was true, France not only was lacking in proper self-sufficiency, but was also drained each year of large sums of money.

Colbert's interest in horse-raising dated back at least as far as 1659. In November of that year he wrote to Mazarin, who had recently acquired the duchy of Nevers, "I have found at Nevers, the finest place in the world to set up a horse-raising establishment." He had actually begun work on it, he announced.<sup>133</sup>

Four years later, after his rise to power, Colbert's mind was again turning to the matter of horses, for in a circular letter to the intendants, dated June 5, 1663, he wrote that horse-raising was most important, "both to have in time of war the number of horses necessary to mount his [the king's] cavalry, and to escape the necessity of exporting every year considerable sums to foreign lands to buy them."<sup>134</sup>

In 1665 Colbert's interest took concrete form in a project for establishing horse-breeding all over France. On October 7 he sent out a circular explaining the plan. The king wished the kingdom to have an abundance of all things, declared Colbert. But there was a scarcity of good horses. This forced their importation and caused "a notable export of money into foreign lands." To remedy the situation, the king

<sup>132</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, V, 347, note 1; III<sup>e</sup>, 486.

<sup>133</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, I, 399.

<sup>134</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 206.

had sent to foreign lands and secured a large number of superior stallions. These horses were to be distributed to nobles and other persons who wished to go in for horse-raising. Elaborate instructions were given as to how to care for the stallions. They were to be kept in dry stables, properly shod, cold water was not to be given them, and so forth. Advice as to how to breed horses was also proffered, and it was stipulated that the king's stallions were to be used only for breeding purposes and were not even to be ridden by those to whom they were entrusted.<sup>135</sup>

Ten days later, on October 17, 1665, a decree of the Council of State was issued in regard to the horse-raising project. To the information in the circular, it added certain facts. The king had bought his stallions in Holland, Denmark, and on the Barbary coast. Those of the heavy northern type, suitable for carriages and coaches, were to be sent out to the seacoast areas from Brittany to Guyenne, where there were suitable mares. The Arab stallions would go to Poitou, Saintonge, and Auvergne. The sieur Garsault was to be in charge of the distribution. Through him a list of those to whom the stallions had been entrusted would be drawn up. The list was to be registered, and those on it were to be exempt from the lodging of soldiers and from watch and ward. They were not to be made collectors of the *taille*, their payments of the *taille* were to be reduced by 30 *livres*, and were not to be raised thereafter. Each stallion was to be marked on the thigh with an "L" and a crown to signify its royal status. Those keeping the stallions were to be allowed to charge 5 *livres* for each mare served. Every mare bred with a royal stallion, and her colts by that stallion, were to be marked with the same symbols, and were to be exempt from seizure for payments due on the *taille* or on municipal debts.<sup>136</sup>

The next year, 1666, saw the project going forward. On January 18 a declaration was issued ordering that the necessary number of stallions be sent into Brittany, forbidding the use of all other stallions for breeding purposes, and providing that a gentleman be commissioned in each of the dioceses of Léon, Tréguier, and Cornouailles to supervise the breeding of horses. The declaration was registered by the *Parlement* of Brittany on February 18, 1667. In April, 1666, Garsault was in Spain to buy stallions. On the eighth of the month he reported from

<sup>135</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 223-27.

<sup>136</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 569; "Collection Clairambault," No. 446, fol. 252.



Cordova that he had purchased eighteen, and in addition a pretty little horse for the queen, and two for Colbert.<sup>137</sup>

A year later, in April, 1667, Colbert was interested in the proposal of a certain M. de Caramini, who had offered to transfer his horse-breeding establishment from Catalonia to Roussillon. "Such propositions are always advantageous, when they can be executed," declared Colbert. By the fall of the year some stallions had been dispatched into Normandy, for on September 17 the intendant, Chamillart, wrote that those which had been sent by the king were really too small for the rough roads of that province.<sup>138</sup>

January, 1668, saw a new declaration on horse-raising in Brittany. It pointed out that that province had always enjoyed a reputation for fine horses, and stressed the king's desire to reestablish horse-breeding there. It rehearsed the declaration issued just two years and two days before, and announced that it was to be punctually enforced. It stated that a number of stallions had already been sent into Brittany. In addition, it announced several new provisions. Beside the regular fees, the owner of the mare served was to give the stallion a bushel of oats. Those to whom stallions had been entrusted were forbidden to take them to assemblies or pardons, for the purpose of having them fight there. Stallions under four years old were not to be used for breeding purposes. Royal stallions were not to be bred with defective mares. Peasants were not to let small runty stallions run loose in the pastures of the Landes. Those in charge of the stallions were to keep a record of the mares served. To encourage further the use of royal stallions, those parishes which had assumed the burden of keeping one were to be exempt from the lodging of soldiers. This new declaration was registered by the *Parlement* of Brittany on February 18, 1669, with the request that the bushel of grain mentioned be changed to one-eighth of a horseload, because of the diversity of measures in common use.<sup>139</sup>

A decree of April 11, 1669, signed by Colbert, took the work several steps further. It explained again that the king was anxious to reestablish horse-breeding, so as to prevent the annual export of a "notable sum of money." The king had heard, the decree declared, that there were in the kingdom large numbers of small and defective stallions, capable of producing only poor "breeds of horses." Nothing could

<sup>137</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 79, fols. 40-41; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 446-48.

<sup>138</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 228; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 778.

<sup>139</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 79, fols. 40-41.

be more prejudicial to the reestablishment of horse-raising than their use in breeding. The king therefore ordered the commissioners of horse-raising who had been appointed in the various generalities, and the intendants, to investigate these poor stallions and to consider means of doing away with their use and of substituting the good stallions supplied by the king. In the meanwhile, the intendants and commissioners were directed to draw up lists of the small and poor stallions and to order their owners to castrate them, with such penalties for nonobservance as the intendants might deem proper.<sup>140</sup>

In the same year instructions for the breeding of horses, with particular reference to the royal stallions, were printed at Paris and sent out to the provinces. In part, they consisted of good, sensible advice on the stabling, feeding, and care of horses, the selection of the mare, and so forth. In part, they reflected the limitations of the biological knowledge of the times. It was suggested, for instance, that the mare to be served should be allowed to look at the stallion for a considerable space of time, as this would help her to conceive a colt like the stallion.<sup>141</sup> The distribution of the royal stallion seems to have gone on steadily during 1669. On September 2, for example, the intendant of Burgundy reported to Colbert that he had received the eight stallions that had been sent to him. He assured the minister that there was no need to worry about them, for they had been placed in the hands of suitable persons and where they would do the most good.<sup>142</sup>

In the succeeding years Colbert strove to arouse and to sustain interest in his horse-breeding program. On July 25, 1670, he wrote the intendant at Orléans and told him of the king's interest in the matter. The king had, he explained, distributed more than 500 stallions to peasants, gentlemen, and officials who were interested in horse-raising. Yet no requests for stallions had been received from Orléanais. The intendant was directed to encourage gentlemen to ask for them. To the duc de Chaulnes, governor of Brittany, Colbert wrote on August 25, 1671, explaining that the king regarded horse-raising as a way to aid the province and to keep money in France that "must otherwise be sent to Germany or Franche Comté." Since the king was planning to increase the number of his cavalry, it would be doubly profitable for the Bretons to raise horses. In August, 1672, a report came to Col-

<sup>140</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,740, fol. 274; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 448.

<sup>141</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 446, fols. 247-54.

<sup>142</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fol. 266.

bert from Normandy, explaining some of the difficulties that the whole project had been encountering. It stated that at the horse-fair of Guibray only four offspring of royal stallions had been offered for sale. They had been snapped up by eager buyers. The reason for the small number lay in fears of the peasants. They had been afraid to take their mares to the royal stallions because the latter seemed so much bigger than the former, and because they had the idea that the colts might be taken from them. But they were getting over these notions, and the prospects seemed reasonably bright.<sup>143</sup>

The Dutch war did not interrupt the purchase and distribution of new royal stallions. With ups and downs, local successes and local rebuffs, the work went on. On July 12, 1674, Chamillart, intendant at Caen, wrote Colbert that the royal stallions were being well kept, that the rise in prices of horses had encouraged their use, and that he had appointed a commissioner to inspect the whole horse-raising situation.<sup>144</sup>

On May 29, 1675, Garsault wrote Colbert from Saint-Léger. He had begun his inspection two weeks earlier and had found everything in good shape. He told of the stallions and of the mares with which they had been bred. There had arrived already twenty-eight colts, of which seventeen were males. Seven or eight more were on the way, and there had been a number of miscarriages because of the long winter. The following year Colbert instructed the intendants to find out about the offspring of the royal stallions, as part of their regular annual inspection.<sup>145</sup>

All the reports, however, were not favorable. In 1676 the sieur Du Plessis was sent into Brittany, as a royal commissioner, to inspect the horse-raising situation. He was informed by Claude de Tredern, of the parish of Plougoulm, that, contrary to the decrees and ordinances, inferior stallions and even two-year old colts were being used for breeding purposes, instead of the royal stallions, because of the low fees charged for the services of the former. Claude de Tredern had an interest in the matter, since he had charge of a royal stallion. He was especially outraged by the attitude of Janne Caëer, widow of Jan Moruan, and her children. Though Tredern had repeatedly ordered her to stop, she was still using two-year-old colts for breeding purposes. He

<sup>143</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 231, 244; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 612.

<sup>144</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 168 bis, fols. 390-93; Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 782.

<sup>145</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 171, fols. 329-32; Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 375.

had begun a lawsuit against her, but it was yet undecided and she refused to desist from the unlawful procedures. In the previous year she had used two two-year-old stallions for servicing all sorts of mares. These facts had been affirmed by witnesses before notaries at Morlaix.

From the duc de Chaulnes, governor of Brittany, Du Plessis secured on October 1, 1676, an ordinance covering the situation. It permitted him to seize all stallions, other than royal ones, being used for breeding purposes, and to sell them at auction in the nearest city, one-third of the proceeds being given to the informers and two-thirds to the poor. On the morning of October 16, Du Plessis, armed with the governor's ordinance and accompanied by Tredern, a valet or agent of the governor, and the sieur Sombreval, went to the manor of Kulaounen in the parish of Plougoulm, where dwelt the woman Caëer and her children. In the stable were found two two-year-old colts, one brown, one bay. They seemed to have been castrated within the last week. At this point there intervened a priest, named Dom François Belleau, a certain François Laurens, the children of the widow, and other persons unknown to Du Plessis. To them Du Plessis declared his status and his authority, and announced the seizure of the horses for violation of the decrees and ordinances. Despite the opposition, it seems that Du Plessis was able to take the horses away for sale in Morlaix.<sup>146</sup>

In the spring of the next year the industrious Tredern was making investigations for and reports to Du Plessis. In fifteen parishes he found more than fifty poor stallions, unsuited for breeding purposes. For example, in the parish of Treffaouénen, Laurans Quillac had a gray three-year-old stallion; Nicolas Guégen had a similar one; and Christophle Le Mesmeue had a four-year-old bay stallion. In some cases, at least, the efforts to enforce the laws against the possession of inferior stallions in Brittany led to much bad feeling, arrests, fines, fights, lawsuits, imprisonments, and assaults.<sup>147</sup>

From Alençon the intendant, Morangis, reported in September, 1678, that he, too, was working hard to encourage horse-breeding and to get rid of the small and poor stallions. In April of the next year Colbert was urging that horses be brought from the Pays d'Aunis and the La Rochelle area to establish horse-raising in lower Poitou. If they could not be secured, he was prepared to take advantage of the cessation

<sup>146</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 79, fols. 42-43.

<sup>147</sup> "Collection Morel de Thoisy," No. 79, fols. 48-50, 52.

of hostilities and import some from Holland. In October, 1679, an agent reported for Poitou that there were seventeen royal stallions and sixty-four privately owned, but subject to inspection. A number of persons had two stallions. Those interested in horse-breeding included a good many gentlemen and at least one doctor.<sup>148</sup>

A new problem and its solution was brought to Colbert's attention by Morangis in June, 1679. He wrote that he had inspected the royal stallions of the generality and found them all in good shape, save for two or three which were no longer of any use. Those who had been in charge of these latter were unwilling to replace them. But Morangis was going to force them to do so at their own expense, by threatening to take away the privileges and exemptions they had been enjoying. The beneficial effects of the royal aid to horse-breeding were not very evident in the Alençon area, Morangis declared, because the colts were sold to other districts at the age of thirty months.<sup>149</sup>

The last remark was perhaps intended to explain a report, prepared by Du Plessis and certified by Morangis, which was sent on to Colbert at about the same time. It showed that in the generality of Alençon there were thirty-seven stallions. Of these, nine were privately owned but had been approved by royal inspectors, one in 1675, one in 1676, five in 1677, one in 1678, and one in 1679. The twenty-eight royal stallions had been distributed thus—four in 1672, six in 1673, two in 1674, one in 1675, four in 1676, five in 1678, one in 1679, and five at dates unspecified. Of the persons having royal stallions, five were farmers; four, cattle merchants; two, merchant drapers; one, a priest; one, a noble; four, innkeepers; one, a public prosecutor; two, horse merchants; seven, of unspecified status; and one was the commissioner Du Plessis himself. Of those owning private stallions, one was a farmer; one, a merchant draper; one, an innkeeper; one, a forge master; one, a horse merchant; one, an apothecary; and three of unspecified status.<sup>150</sup>

Sometimes, because of difficulties of communication and of administrative lapses, peculiar problems arose in connection with the horse-raising program. On April 22, 1679, for example, Colbert wrote the intendant in Auvergne in regard to the claims of a man named Neyron.

<sup>148</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 71, Morangis to Colbert, September 3, 1678; "Collection Clairambault," No. 462, fols. 536-37; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 449, Report to Colbert, October, 1679.

<sup>149</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 71, Morangis to Colbert, June 20, 1679.

<sup>150</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 71, Report, du Plessis to Colbert, June, 1679.

This individual insisted that he had been appointed a commissioner for horse-raising by de Fortia, the previous intendant. In this capacity, he declared, he had spent 7,000 *livres* in having castrated some 1,500 small stallions unworthy to become the fathers of a future generation of French horses. He was now asking Colbert to reimburse him for the sum that he had expended. Colbert instructed the intendant to look into the matter, and remarked that such a large-scale operation could not have been carried out without becoming well known in the province.<sup>151</sup>

In the same month Colbert, in a letter to the intendant at Limoges, adumbrated a new method for encouraging the raising of horses. The minister was glad, he said, to have reports on the horse fair at Chalus. If the intendant found some "extraordinarily fine" colts, he might buy "a couple" for the king. "But," Colbert went on, "in case you should find them extremely fine, you must give the price asked for them, so as to encourage thus all those who have mares to seek means to raise fine horses." A year later, on May 2, 1680, Colbert wrote to the same intendant to express his surprise that there had been so few colts at the Chalus fair. It might be a good idea, Colbert suggested, to buy half a dozen of the best male colts each year and raise them up to be royal stallions.<sup>152</sup>

Two weeks later, on May 16, 1680, Colbert wrote to another correspondent suggesting that he buy four to six colts and raise them up to be stallions. M. Garsault, Colbert explained, was in Italy trying to buy some stallions, but the right kind were hard to find. In a circular letter to the intendants dated June 1, 1680, Colbert wrote of the value of horse-raising. "Among the means that the people may use," he pointed out, "to attract money for their subsistence and for the payment of taxes, that of the reestablishment of horse-raising is very worthy of consideration." It was especially important, too, in that it would prevent the export of money.<sup>153</sup>

The commissioners of horse-raising seem to have been appointed, sometimes by the king (Colbert), like Du Plessis, sometimes by the intendants or by Garsault, who was theoretically in charge of the whole project. But in general, they seem to have been paid by the crown and to have been under the authority of Garsault. On February 20, 1681, Colbert wrote Garsault to say that he understood the commis-

<sup>151</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 414.

<sup>152</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 272, note 1.

<sup>153</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 463, p. 334; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 279.

sioners were demanding their salaries. He asked Garsault to draw up and send on a list of the commissioners who had done well and a list of those who had not, together with a recommendation as to what should be done about their salaries.<sup>154</sup>

On April 12 of the same year, Colbert, in a letter to Le Blanc, intendant at Rouen, stated his view on horse-raising at some length. He wrote:

Among the means that the people may use to attract money for their subsistence and the payment of their taxes, that of the reestablishment of horse raising is very worthy of consideration, not only through the advantages ~~that~~ the people can get from it, but because in times of peace and war it is necessary to import a very great number of horses from foreign lands, and consequently to cause to go out of the kingdom money which would remain in the hands of the people, if once horse-raising was sufficiently reestablished so that the necessary number of horses could be found in the kingdom.

Le Blanc, therefore, was to urge the gentlemen, chief bourgeois, and peasants to keep more horses and to raise more horses. The wording of the letter is so similar to that of the previous year as to suggest that the matter had almost settled down into a formula in Colbert's mind.<sup>155</sup>

The year 1682 saw a variety of developments in the matter of horse-raising. In May the intendant of Poitou wrote that he had inspected the horse-breeding of the province and found it in bad shape. Most of the stallions were "badly made" and not fit to produce fine horses. He had threatened to take away the privileges and exemptions of their owners, if he did not see some better-looking stallions on his tour in October. A little earlier in the year, on February 26, Colbert wrote to a man named Genouillé, who was corresponding with him on horse-raising in Berry. Genouillé had declared that twenty-two stallions could be used at different places in that province and that he thought he could find them in the locality. Colbert told him to get only the finest, as there was no use in getting moderately good ones. Genouillé was to work with another man, named Poncet, to encourage people to keep fine mares for breeding purposes. Colbert further authorized him to select a person to put in charge of the horse-breeding establishment that was to be set up at Hauterive.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>154</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 464, fol. 91.

<sup>155</sup> "Manuscrits français," No. 8,752, fols. 414-15.

<sup>156</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 449, Basville to Colbert, May 14, 1682; "Collection Clairambault," No. 466, fol. 108.

It was in 1682, likewise, that the Estates of Burgundy appropriated 6,000 *livres* to be used over the next three years to encourage horse-breeding. This was a significant beginning, for the amount was raised to 13,000 *livres* in 1685, to 23,000 *livres* in 1691, and fixed at 20,000 *livres* for each three-year period in 1691. In 1700 a provincial inspector of horse-breeding was established, with a salary of 3,000 *livres* a year.<sup>157</sup>

On September 7, 1682, Colbert wrote Garsault a letter that was almost exultant. The king had agreed to visit the horse-raising establishment at Saint-Léger. Garsault was to see that all was in order. Eighteen hundred horses had been sold at the fair of Guibray. The king had bought twelve. Now that horse raising was really beginning to succeed in France, Garsault must strive more than ever to secure good stallions.<sup>158</sup>

It seems to have been the privileges granted to those who kept stallions that were responsible for much of the success of the horse-raising project. This is made clear by an interchange of letters between Colbert and Nointel, intendant at Tours, in 1683. On May 22 Colbert wrote Nointel that since the number of stallions in his generality had declined considerably, he was to purchase some young ones at the fairs and distribute them about when they reached the age of five or six years. Nointel replied, on June 4, that certain individuals had offered to buy and maintain valuable stallions if they were permitted to enjoy the privileges granted by the king. Thus the same end would be attained at much less cost.<sup>159</sup> On June 10 Colbert replied:

As to the proposition that certain individuals have made you to buy horses to serve as stallions on condition that they shall enjoy certain privileges, you should observe that these privileges are always a burden on the people and they must be restricted as far as possible; but since the establishment of stallions and of horse-raising might be of great advantage to the people, perhaps the king would consent that one or two persons in each *élection* should enjoy these privileges, on condition of having fine horses to serve as stallions.

But in any case, Nointel was to buy any specially fine young horses that turned up at the fairs and to keep them until they were old enough to serve as stallions.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>157</sup> A. Thomas, *Une Province sous Louis XIV*, p. 195.

<sup>158</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 295.

<sup>159</sup> G<sup>7</sup>, No. 518, Nointel to Colbert, June 4, 1683.

<sup>160</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 226-27.



In a letter of June 4, 1683, to the intendant, Basville, Colbert paid tribute to the work of Garsault, who was planning to journey into Poitou to inspect and improve horse-raising there. Basville was directed to help him. "You know," declared Colbert, "that it was he who began this establishment in the whole kingdom." In a letter to Garsault himself of the same date, Colbert employed a most friendly tone; he may even have intended to make a little joke, which for him was almost unprecedented. The little horse which Garsault had thought suitable for Colbert was not the right size for him "to make use of in the country," and since he did not need it "to take a turn" (*me promener*)<sup>161</sup> in his garden, he was sending it to Saint-Léger. It seems that the horse-raising establishment at Hauterive belonged to Colbert, for he referred to it as *mon haras* and was delighted that Garsault had found it, and the horses bought by Genouillé, in good shape. Garsault was to settle with Genouillé for the cost of feeding and keeping all the young horses. Colbert would arrange to have him paid every three months thereafter.<sup>161</sup>

To evaluate Colbert's efforts to increase the number and improve the quality of the horses raised in France is impossible. But there can be little doubt that he contributed greatly to these ends and that some of the fine strains of horses bred in after years in Brittany and other provinces were descended from the royal stallions of Colbert's time. Indeed his semiscientific efforts at weeding out inferior stallions and introducing superior ones were an interesting forerunner of the great improvements in horse-breeding in England and elsewhere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is a tribute to Colbert's vision that he sought to bring into France not only the heavy powerful horses of northern Europe, but also the lighter, more agile, spirited Arab stallions from the Barbary Coast.

*Livestock.*—Colbert's interest in the domestic animals of France was not confined to horses. Throughout his career he sought to increase the amount of cattle, sheep, and other livestock in France, though he adopted no such well-conceived and persistent policy as with horses. Early in his years as chief minister, he began to issue orders designed to reduce the seizure of livestock for nonpayment of various sorts of debts, and by 1666 reports were coming in that this measure was bringing about an increase in the number of farm animals. In April, 1667,

<sup>161</sup> "Collection Clairambault," No. 468, fols. 204-7.

an edict was issued, forbidding the seizure of livestock for personal or municipal debts for four years. The edict was renewed for six years in 1671, and again in 1678.<sup>162</sup>

Despite these enactments, the seizure of livestock continued in some areas, and Colbert repeatedly enjoined the intendants to prevent such seizures. In 1670 he urged an intendant to reduce the seizure of animals from those who had not paid the *taille*. In 1673 he explained the royal policy on this matter to the intendant of Montauban. There was no decree, Colbert explained, forbidding the seizure of livestock for non-payment of the *taille*. But the king desired that this extreme step should be taken only in cases of absolute necessity. On the other hand, the people were not to be informed of the royal policy, so that fear of the seizure of their animals would force them to pay their taxes.<sup>163</sup>

In 1679, in circular instructions sent out to the intendants, Colbert urged them to foster the increase of livestock and to prevent the seizure of animals, even for failure to pay the *taille*. In 1681 the disregard of the royal declaration of 1678, forbidding the seizure of livestock for private or municipal debts, caused Colbert to send to all the intendants copies of the enactment with orders to enforce it.<sup>164</sup>

Through much of Colbert's correspondence the question of the encouragement of livestock was like a minor theme. He is glad to hear that livestock is increasing in Gascony (1673). The intendants are to look into everything connected with livestock (1676). He is glad that the prohibition of seizure is so advantageous to Normandy (1678). The intendants are to stimulate the people to raise more animals; they are to investigate the increase of livestock; they are to aid the raising of animals (1679). He is happy that the prohibition of seizure is producing such good results (1680). So convinced did Colbert become of the worth of his work that he could scarcely believe contrary reports. On June 28, 1680, for instance, he wrote to Le Blanc, intendant at Rouen, "I am astonished that you say there is so little livestock in the generality, and since I know that province, I fear that you have put a little too much faith in what has been said to you." Indeed most of the reports that came in were favorable. On January 23, 1679, Morangis, the intendant at Alençon, wrote Colbert that he had received the

<sup>162</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 772; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 577-78, 579; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 425-26.

<sup>163</sup> "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 154, fol. 206; Colbert, *Lettres*, II, 73; IV, 263.

<sup>164</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II, 88-89, 168; G<sup>7</sup>, No. 1893, memorandum for Colbert, 1681.

royal declaration forbidding the seizure of livestock for debts, that he was persuaded "that nothing is more capable of reëstablishing this province," and that "if once the inhabitants find surety in this trade, this will be the most certain way to make money come into" the province. Or again, the intendant Nointel wrote from Tours, in 1682, that the royal declaration was being punctually enforced. In October, 1682, Colbert could write that he was sure that the prohibition against seizing livestock, which had been in force for twenty years, had considerably increased the number of farm animals everywhere in the kingdom.<sup>165</sup>

Another method used by Colbert to increase the livestock in France was to endeavor to secure a good market for cattle by insisting that the beef sent to the West Indies in large quantities should be French beef. In 1670 Colbert persuaded the West India Company to try to purchase beef for the islands in France, instead of getting Irish beef as in the past. On October 27 he wrote to one of the directors to say that he felt very strongly on the matter, and to assure him that, once he started buying cattle in the fairs near La Rochelle, the price would not rise. On the contrary, as more people heard about it and brought their animals in, the price would decline. On November 13 he wrote the director again, telling him not to be discouraged by initial difficulties, and promising a bounty of 12,000 *livres* if the Company sent 4,000 barrels of French beef to the islands. "Always buy French cattle," insisted Colbert.<sup>166</sup>

In January, 1671, Colbert wrote that he was glad to hear that the Company was buying so many French cattle that no more Irish beef would be needed. In February he wrote, "There is nothing better for the commerce of the kingdom and for that of the islands than to bring all the merchants to buy only French cattle." In March he was urging the Company to exclude all Irish beef from its trade, to be sure to send 4,000 barrels of French beef so as to qualify for the bounty, and to get the merchants to send live animals to the West Indies. Later in the year this policy was formulated into law, for a decree of the Council of State of August 17 denied Irish beef entrepôt rights in France, while another of November 4 forbade the shipment of foreign beef

<sup>165</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 263; II<sup>1</sup>, 89, 97, 106; II<sup>2</sup>, 739-40; "Manuscripts français," No. 8,751, fol. 305; "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fol. 276; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 71, Morangis to Colbert, January 23, 1679; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 518, Nointel to Colbert, May 25, 1682.

<sup>166</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 571, 579-81.

to the West Indies. On November 19 Colbert announced to the directors of the West India Company that the trade to the islands was to be open to all merchants, save that the shipment of Negroes, livestock, and meat to the islands was to be reserved to the company. On January 13 a royal ordinance established a bounty of 4 *livres* per barrel on French beef shipped to the islands.<sup>167</sup>

Protests from the islands, the danger of a food shortage there, and the opening of the Dutch war caused Colbert to abandon his efforts. A royal ordinance of December 16, 1673, permitted the shipment of foreign beef to the West Indies. An effort was made to revive the policy in 1677, but in 1681 Colbert rejected the suggestion that after a three-year warning the export of Irish beef to the West Indies be again forbidden.<sup>168</sup>

Sheep, as well as cattle, got some attention from Colbert. He was prepared in 1670 to ennoble a projector who was planning to introduce in France the raising of Spanish sheep. In the same year he expressed interest in a plan to import English sheep, though his researches into the matter had led him to believe that the superiority of the English wool was due to the fact that the sheep there slept in the open, a thing rendered impossible in France by the presence of wolves. The idea grew on him, however, for some two months later he was suggesting that it be arranged that each ship returning from England bring back three or four rams of the best wool-bearing varieties, on the grounds that such importations might do much to improve the sheep of France. In 1672 Colbert ordered the consul at Cadiz to secure and send to France two dozen rams. From time to time Colbert also took steps to organize wolf hunts and to get the royal forest officers to destroy the wolves which still ravaged French flocks.<sup>169</sup>

*Relief for peasants.*—It was part of Colbert's financial policy to endeavor to reduce the burdens on the agricultural population, so as to increase their prosperity, their tax-paying ability, and the general wealth of France. This end he sought to achieve by reducing exemptions from taxes (of nobles and officials), by decreasing the *taille*, by increasing the indirect taxes like the *aides*, which fell on all persons, by reducing

<sup>167</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>2</sup>, 600, 608, 612-13, 637-38; Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 230-31, 253-54, 259-60.

<sup>168</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises*, I, 270, 304-5; Mims, *Colbert's West India Policy*, pp. 322-25.

<sup>169</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 232, 234, note 1, 296-97.

the expenditures of the government, and by increasing the efficiency of its whole financial system. Though he was able to accomplish a good deal, he was not able to achieve a thoroughgoing reformation of French finances, and the increase in expenditures caused by the Dutch war ruined many of his plans.

All through his career Colbert was anxious to reduce the *taille*. But though he was partly thwarted in this design, he strove, in so far as a big *taille* had to be collected, to make its payment as easy as possible. He sought to make the apportionment fair, to prevent collection by the quartering of troops, and to reduce or end imprisonment for non-payment of the *taille*. His instructions to the intendants, dated January 2, 1682, give a good idea of his program. It was the king's policy, he declared, to secure "for his peoples as much relief as the expenses of the state may permit." This implied efforts to liquidate and pay off the debts of cities and municipalities, to prevent the seizure of livestock, to reduce "by every possible means" the expenses of levying and collecting the *tailles*, to prevent the imprisonment of collectors of the *tailles*, and to punish all those who abused their authority in collecting the king's duties and taxes. In a letter of October 16, 1682, to the intendant at Alençon, Colbert made clear his attitude toward the peasants—a mixture of good will and firmness. In reply to reports of poverty in the *élections* of Mortagne, Verneuil, and Conches, he remarked:

I must say to you that on this occasion and on all others you should investigate with care whence this poverty springs, and seek thereafter ways to decrease it, either by a relief from the *tailles*, putting on the parishes that are better off the amounts you take off the poor ones, or by procuring the people the means of earning a living, or by finding out if this poverty springs from a natural idleness; in this last case, they do not deserve much relief.<sup>170</sup>

Colbert kept a watchful eye on the condition of the peasants. To the intendant at Tours he wrote on September 12, 1670:

Investigate also in all your visits, to see if the peasants are reëstablishing themselves a bit, how they are dressed, what their furniture is like, and whether they make bigger celebrations on holy days and at weddings than they have done heretofore; these four points include all the knowledge that one can get of an improvement in their state.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>170</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 254; II<sup>1</sup>, 73, 126, 208, 224, 258; G<sup>1</sup>, No. 1, Colbert to the intendants, January 2, 1682.

<sup>171</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 550-51.

In times of catastrophe, hailstorms, fires, or the like, Colbert was quite ready to grant tax relief to the people involved. But he was also anxious not to be imposed on. In 1672, for example, a remission of 30,000 *livres* in the *tailles* was granted to the *élections* of the generality of Montauban, which had suffered from hail and flood. Colbert instructed the intendant to see that those who had suffered most got the relief. In 1680 the intendant again asked for relief because of a disastrous hailstorm. Normandy, in 1676, was granted a reduction in taxes because of fires and a hailstorm, but the intendant, to prevent frauds, was forced publicly to forbid officers, sent out to investigate the situation, to accept any money from the parishes affected, and to insist on accurate reports of the damage so as to allot the remissions. In regard to these reductions, Colbert warned the intendant, Le Blanc, to be on his guard against exaggerations as to the damages wrought by the fires at Buchy and Bolbec. This was especially necessary in Normandy, where the people were always trying to get relief from the taxes. As to the hail, Colbert remarked:

You know that hail has never caused a famine, and when it affects some section it causes the neighboring sections to have a better market for their produce, added to the fact that in the matter of hailstorms it has always been held as a maxim not to see the damage at the time it is done, because it then appears frightful, but to wait till a later time at which the damage is sometimes found to be notably decreased. I say this to you only in general, trusting to you to recognize the amount of damage and to remedy it as you deem proper.<sup>172</sup>

Whether he was trying to reduce the burden of the passage of troops, or to suppress the dovecots in southern France,<sup>173</sup> there can be little doubt that Colbert had the welfare of the French peasants at heart, though the fact that he was more interested in industry, commerce, and taxation than he was in agriculture, tends somewhat to obscure this fact. But it is clear that even in cases of conflicting interests, he was reluctant to sacrifice the peasants and anxious to improve their lot.

*Drainage and conservation.*—The increase of agricultural land through the drainage of swamps was an idea that was bound to interest Colbert, though, on the other hand, he paid less attention to it

<sup>172</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 5, 255; II<sup>2</sup>, 567; IV, 120; "Manuscrits français," No. 4,303, fol. 114; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,761 *bis*, fols. 20, 25; cf. also G<sup>7</sup>, No. 518, letter from Nointel to Colbert, May 9, 1683; "Manuscrits français," No. 8,751, fols. 70-71, 78, 80-81.

<sup>173</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, ccxix; IV, 152-53.

than might have been expected. In August, 1667, Chamillart, intendant at Caen, reported to Colbert his efforts to interest a rich gentleman in the project of draining 16,000 acres of the marsh of Cotentin along the river Douvres. But what came of his efforts is not clear. In 1670 Colbert expressed his conviction that it would be well worth while to spend 3,000 *livres* on draining the swamps near Bordeaux. Whatever plans were afoot seem to have been interrupted by the Dutch war. Once it was over, Colbert felt that such works could be undertaken again. In July, 1679, the king was requested to grant a large marsh in Languedoc to an individual, on condition that he drain it. Colbert wrote of the matter to the intendant at Toulouse, saying:

I feel that it would be much more advantageous to do these works at public expense, rather than to do them by gifts of this kind to individuals, who take these grants only for their personal use and often ruin themselves by their feebleness without any advantage to the public.

Earlier in the same year Colbert, on learning that the enforcement of a decree for draining the marshes of two small rivers was being opposed, took immediate steps to put an end to the opposition. When, in 1682, the inhabitants of the drained marsh of Blaye appealed for a continuation of their tax exemptions, Colbert said that they should pay the *taille* just like everyone else, unless they could adduce "very powerful reasons" to the contrary. But the upshot of it was that the marsh dwellers continued to enjoy their tax exemptions, apparently as a reward for their efforts in draining the land.<sup>174</sup>

Colbert's work for the conservation of the timber and water resources of France was of more importance than his somewhat sporadic interest in drainage. As early as 1662 he was planning a wholesale reformation of the administration of the royal forests, partly to increase the financial return therefrom and partly to preserve the national supply of wood for fuel, building, and naval purposes. To Colbert, a forest with trees suitable for shipbuilding was "a treasure—which we must carefully preserve." So effective was Colbert's work on the royal forests, from a financial point of view, that he raised the income to the crown from them from about 50,000 *livres* in 1662 to more than 800,000 *livres* in 1680.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Depping, *Correspondance administrative*, III, 777; Colbert, *Lettres*, IV, 232, 275-76; "Collection Clairambault," No. 461, p. 8; "Collection Clairambault," No. 467, fols. 98, 154, 234.

<sup>175</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>a</sup>, 63; III<sup>a</sup>, 42-43; III<sup>a</sup>, 177.

The chief fruit of Colbert's labors in the matter of conservation was the Ordinance of Waters and Forests of August, 1669. Prepared by Colbert and 21 commissioners in the preceding 7 years, it was conservation code, both practical and forward-looking. From an administrative point of view, it reduced the number of officers in charge of the royal forests, simplified the organization, established the duties of each official, and unified the regulations and penalties for all provinces. From a conservation point of view, it laid down regulations for the use and preservation of the woods and waters, not only of the royal domain, but to some degree of all France. It restricted the cutting of wood to some extent. For instance, it provided that on ecclesiastical and communal lands, at least one-quarter of the area was to be set aside for the growth of timber trees (as distinct from smaller trees used for firewood, and so forth). On each acre that was cut over, furthermore, at least 16 trees were to be left to grow to a timber size. Woods belonging to private individuals were to be subject to this last regulation. Private forests were not to be cut over for firewood and other smaller trees oftener than once in 40 years, nor for timber trees oftener than once in 120 years. Reserved areas and the timber trees left on cut-over land were to be reputed as part of the royal woods. No forest within 10 leagues of the sea or of a navigable river was to be cut without 6 months' prior notice to the grand master of forests and the *contrôleur général* of finances.

In addition, the ordinance provided drastic regulations for the preservation of fish and game. For example, no trout under six inches from eye to tail were to be kept; night and Sunday fishing, as well as fishing during the spawning season, was forbidden. Only master fishermen or those owning fishing rights were to be allowed to fish. Even salt-water coastal fish were given some protection as to the methods by which they could be taken. All in all, the conservation measures of the ordinance, though they were probably not enforced very rigidly, represented a real recognition of the duty of the state to preserve the nation's resources.<sup>176</sup>

##### 5. BULLIONISM AND LUXURY

An anonymous *mémoire* dated June 2, 1669, declared that the purpose of foreign commerce is the "abundance and quantity of money."

<sup>176</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 219-319; Clément, *Colbert*, p. 243.



The way to make commerce flourish is "to drain, improve and put under cultivation waste lands and to clear wooded ones, to establish manufactures, to grant privileges to merchants and workers."<sup>177</sup> Good bullionist as he was, Colbert would probably have agreed with these ideas. But some of his bullionist tactics were such as to be better treated separately than in connection with commerce, with industry, or with agriculture.

The basic tenets of bullionism Colbert never doubted. He might modify his policies away from strict bullionism to some degree, if circumstances demanded, as in the Levant trade. But like a magnetized needle, his thoughts would eventually come back to their true north—the belief that the more money a country had in it, the better off it was. Sometimes his bullionism drove him to quaint efforts, as in the summer of 1672, when he wished to provide facilities so that soldiers, officers, merchants, and camp followers with the French army in Flanders might send their money back to France.<sup>178</sup> More often his devices were along the old traditional lines of bullionist legislation.

In 1663 an edict, dated September 10, permitted the free transportation of coin and bullion anywhere in France, but renewed the old prohibitions of export. On October 10 of the same year, a decree of the Council of State removed all duties on silver bullion imported into the kingdom. It was perhaps for similar motives (though the decree gave others) that a decree of February 5, 1678, removed the existing 5-percent duty on the importation of precious stones. A decree of December 2, 1666, forbade the export of foreign coins and French 5-sous pieces to the Levant. All money taken thither was to be registered with the French consul upon arrival. Thus the export of French coin was allowed under certain restrictions.<sup>179</sup>

In 1670 Colbert was much troubled by the export of money and bullion. In a *mémoire* of the king in that year, he attributed the financial difficulties of the country to excessive expenditures by the government, the export of money from the kingdom, and the large size of the taxes compared to the amount of money in France. He was especially worried by the leakage of money from French Flanders into Spanish Flanders and Holland. In October he was distressed about the export of money to Bruges. It was perhaps with these thoughts in mind that he secured

<sup>177</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,740, fols. 92-93.

<sup>178</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, II<sup>1</sup>, 74.

<sup>179</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, lxxix, 420, 421, 424; cf. also p. 433; AD XI, No. 34, *liasse* 1, decree of February 5, 1678.

the issuance of a decree of the Council of State, dated October 30, 1670, which forbade all export of coin or bullion.<sup>180</sup>

It must, of course, be borne in mind that whether the export of coin and bullion technically was or was not permitted at the moment (and it usually was not), such export in the course of trade, especially to the Levant, was an every-day affair. Even the indefatigable Colbert sometimes grew a little weary in this matter. In December, 1679, Le Blanc, intendant at Rouen, informed Colbert that 6,000 or 7,000 *livres* of gold had been sent from Saint-Valery, Dieppe, and Calais to England. Colbert replied on the twenty-second of the month, "Although it is difficult to prevent this export, I have not stopped giving orders for a long time to the farmers of the 'five big farms' to tell their agents to redouble their efforts to prevent it."<sup>181</sup> Indeed, though Colbert went through the motions—and sometimes they were vigorous ones—of attempting directly to stop the export of coin and bullion, he placed his chief reliance on the indirect methods connected with the fostering of industry, commerce, agriculture, colonies, shipping, and so forth.

Like many of his predecessors and some of his contemporaries,<sup>182</sup> Colbert's interest in the reduction of undue luxury sprang largely from bullionist motives. "Examine the means," reads one of his memoranda, "to reduce the over-large quantity of silver which is made into vessels," and his thrifty temperament also led him to see need of reducing the size of dowries and the number of carriages in Paris. Because to him the chief evil of luxury was the consumption or waste of bullion, it was easy for him to support such luxury industries as the manufacture of silks, laces, mirrors, and the like. The only conflict came when, as in the manufacture of gold thread, the industry actually consumed gold or silver. In this case, Colbert encouraged the growth of the industry and at the same time made half-hearted gestures toward enforcing the antiluxury laws. He saw no reason for the makers of gold thread to complain, since they were well aware of the laws on the matter and these laws were of long-standing.<sup>183</sup>

The conflict between luxury legislation and luxury industries is apparent in a royal declaration of May 27, 1661, a date but a few weeks after Mazarin's death and before Colbert was firmly in the saddle.

<sup>180</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 245-50, 426; II<sup>a</sup>, 574.

<sup>181</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 8,752, fol. 186.

<sup>182</sup> E. g., "Cinq Cents de Colbert," No. 196, fols. 8-9, 28-30.

<sup>183</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 13-14; II<sup>a</sup>, 593-94.

This declaration referred to a previous one of November 27, 1660, which, it said, had been effective in reducing luxury, but had also put out of work many "poor artisans" who earned their living by making lace and embroidery. The declaration therefore permitted the wearing of French lace made of linen and of French embroideries and lace of silk, up to two inches in width and 2 *livres* the ell in cost. The ban on foreign lace and embroidery was reiterated.<sup>184</sup>

A new ordinance of June 18, 1663, in which Colbert probably had a hand, forbade the wearing of gold and silver lace, real or false, and gold and silver ornaments, except that buttons of gold and silver might be used in places where buttons were really needed.<sup>185</sup> There were other enactments of one sort or another against luxury in 1664, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1675, 1677, and 1679. Some, like that of 1667, referred to the wearing of gold, silver, and foreign lace. Some dealt with other articles of dress or use.<sup>186</sup>

A law of a specifically bullionist nature was the royal declaration of April 6, 1672. It began with a preamble:

As the abundance of gold and silver in commerce is one of the surest marks of the good order and prosperity of a state, so the bad use made of these metals in the superfluity of private families is a certain mark of their disorder and of the ruin which is almost inseparable from it. This is what sumptuary laws have sought to stop in the best-ordered states.

Previous kings had tried to stop luxury, the declaration continued. But it had continued and absorbed the patrimony of many a family. It was, therefore, forbidden to make or to sell any vessel of gold for table use. Silver basins of 12 *marcs*' weight or less, and silver plates of 8 *marcs*' or less were to be permitted. But other silver articles such as chandeliers, vases, and urns were forbidden. All persons possessing such forbidden vessels were to take them to the mint and receive their full weight in coin with no seigniorage charge. The object of the edict may have been to get gold and silver into circulation for war use, but even so, the motive was thoroughly bullionist.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>184</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 16,744, fol. 241 (475-478 old numbering); cf. Boissonnade, *Colbert*, p. 354, doc. 133.

<sup>186</sup> Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 26. By an obvious misprint the year of the ordinance is given as 1683, rather than 1663.

<sup>186</sup> Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, II, 312-13; Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, XVIII, 191; "Manuscripts français," No. 16,744, fol. 138 (243-45 old numbering).

<sup>187</sup> "Manuscripts français," No. 21,789, fols. 65-67; Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 426.

As in the earlier periods, the enforcement of the antiluxury laws was lax. Sometimes a powerful personage would fortify himself with special permission to wear banned articles. On February 4, 1665, for example, the king issued brevets to the duc d'Enghien and the prince de Condé, giving them the right to wear certain articles of lace, embroidery, gold, and silver, in contravention of existing laws, so as to give them "special marks" of the king's "good will" which would distinguish them "from the others about his person and in his court." More often the laws were frankly ignored by high and low, and the efforts made to enforce them were sporadic, save when some special interest was at stake, as when the lace company strove to have the ban on foreign lace rigidly executed.<sup>188</sup>

As at the king's behest Colbert occasionally tried to put a stop to the gambling by which so many nobles ruined themselves and others, so he worked from time to time to enforce the luxury laws. He worried about the gilding on the carriage of the duchesse de Rohan; the stuffs that had been confiscated from Mlle de Bourbon; the clothes with gold and silver on them that were being made for the King of Poland and the Duchess of Brunswick; the foreigners in Paris who did not obey the sumptuary laws; or the excess of gilt on the carriage of the duc de Bouillon. But there was something almost *pro forma* about his efforts, and his heart does not seem to have been in this work. In fact, it would probably be a fair interpretation to say that Colbert approved mildly of the luxury laws, as sanctioned by tradition and by bullionist theory, helped to issue new ones when occasion seemed to warrant, enforced the existing ones when the king told him to or when there seemed to be special reason for so doing, and did not take the whole matter with his customary earnestness.<sup>189</sup>

A somewhat different method of limiting luxury and forcing bullion into monetary rather than personal use was to tax objects made of gold and silver. This device was used to raise money to meet the war needs of 1672. A royal declaration of March 31 of that year provided that the king should receive 30 *sous* for each ounce of gold and 20 *sous* for each ounce of silver worked up by goldsmiths into articles of luxury. A special mark was to be used to show which objects had paid the tax. There was nothing new in such a law. It had been tried, for instance, in 1631. The tax was doubled by a declaration of February 17,

<sup>188</sup> K, No. 118B, doc. 125.

<sup>189</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VI, 54-55, 71-72.

1674. The doubling was suspended by a decree of May 22, 1674. But the suspension was repealed by a decree of September 30, 1677. The doubled duties, that is 3 *livres* per ounce of gold and 2 *livres* per ounce of silver, were maintained after the close of the war, by a royal ordinance of June, 1680.<sup>100</sup>

## 6. SUMMARY

The work of Colbert in the rather miscellaneous fields that have been treated in this chapter can be summarized only by saying that he tried many things, failed in some, and succeeded in others. In general, his efforts in these minor fields fitted into, completed, or supplemented his major endeavors in commerce or industry. In other cases, they represent merely that surplus of attention which he was able to devote to what he felt to be less pressing or less vital matters. But an attempt to understand the extensive and many-sided activities of Colbert, in the economic sphere, necessitates an effort to visualize him pondering on the royal stallions of Poitou, pushing ahead the partly fruitless search for mines, reducing the taxes of a hail-smitten village, and deliberating on the duchesse de Rohan's carriage, as well as laying tariffs, forming companies, founding colonies, and creating industries.

<sup>100</sup> Colbert, *Lettres*, VII, 426, 434; "Manuscrits français," No. 21,789, fols. 132-33, 154-55, 159.

## XIV

### AFTERTHOUGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS

IT IS not perhaps amiss, after a long survey of Colbert and of the French mercantilism which he so well personified, to attempt to assess his importance. But it is clear that most of the judgments expressed must necessarily be of a tentative and a subjective nature.

By any definition of genius, it is hard to apply that word to Colbert. His was the ability not to originate but to apply. He thought along old established lines with a dogged tenacity that argues a certain limitation of vision, as his delight in discovering and imparting truisms argues even a limitation of his intellectual capacity. Where he shone was in his devotion to his king, his country, and his economic preconceptions. Considering the times, he was a great administrator, certainly one of the greatest of his century. If he had any genius, it was a genius for unremitting toil.

Yet it was probably his very limitations that enabled Colbert to succeed so far as he did. A man with more intelligence or vision would have seen both sides of many questions, would have hesitated and temporized, would have bowed before the stubborn inertia of the masses or the opposition of the classes. A man less dogged would have given up in despair or would have become disgusted by a comparison of possible accomplishments with actual achievements. One way of conceiving Colbert's career would be to think of him as an able, energetic, and devoted subordinate, obeying the inherited behests of a long line of French mercantilist thinkers stretching back through Eon and Richelieu to Montchrétien, Laffemas, and Bodin, and of a long line of mercantilist officials, who had for two centuries been drawing up relatively ineffective laws and setting relatively important precedents.

From yet another point of view it might be held that Colbert was inevitable. Given the mercantilist traditions of France, given the great increase and centralization of power that took place under Louis XIV, there was bound to be some administrator, some royal servant who would combine the two tendencies and produce in France an effective

effort to put the mercantilist tenets into practice on a nation-wide scale. This thesis might be reënforced by the example of England, where the decay of royal power and of a strong central administration after 1660 gradually impaired the effectiveness of the traditional mercantilism in internal economic life and left only the external (commercial and colonial) mercantilism, which was developed in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century through the coöperation of Parliament with powerful pressure groups among the bourgeoisie, and paid for by sops to the landholding classes (the corn laws). From still another angle, Colbert's work might be regarded as a vigorous but somewhat premature attempt to modernize French administrative and economic life.

When all is said, however, it must be granted that Colbert represents something more than the heir of a tradition, or a historical necessity. He had, at least, the ability to see France as a unit, and to sum up the varied and disparate elements of French mercantilism into a consistent whole. He had the ability to organize, almost single-handed, a tremendous effort to attain the objectives set up in the preceding century. He had the ability to administer this thousand-faceted movement, in the face of a multitude of obstacles. He had the ability as a courtier to persuade the king of the validity of his plans and the worth of his ends, and to secure the coöperation for more than two decades of a monarch who was not much interested in economic matters. Without Colbert, it is more than likely that something like Colbertism would have come to France after 1661. But it would, perhaps, have been less well organized, less well rounded, less effective than it was.

That Colbert succeeded so well in his superhuman, self-appointed task is the surprising thing. Yet it is worth while to analyze the causes of his failure, which was certainly more than partial, both for his day and for the future. These causes were many and over some of them Colbert had no control. It is probable, for instance, that his plan to rebuild the industrial and commercial life of France was too ambitious, in view of the technology of the century. Given better communications, given a more efficient industrial technique, given a more highly developed business structure, or a more intelligent business class, he might have succeeded better, though it is also quite possible that these very things might have undermined his mercantilist thinking and made his efforts inappropriate. Or again had there been no Hundred Years'

War and had the triumph of royal power and the centralization of government come earlier in France, Colbert might have had a more effective administrative machine with which to work. As it was, he had to spend most of his time contending with historically insubordinate elements, and he had the greatest difficulty in securing obedience to his simplest mandates.

But more central in Colbert's failure was a matter that arose from his own thinking and was an integral part of his own program. Whatever aspect of Colbert's labors are studied, it seems that his lack of success or incomplete success was due to the Dutch war. It was this war that impaired his financial reforms and drove him to the *affaires extraordinaires* that he detested. It was this war that ruined the Company of the North, the Insurance Company, the Levant Company, all but ruined the East India Company, and checked the progress of the West Indies. It was this war that shut down the flow of subsidies to industry and commerce and shipbuilding. It was this war that reduced the value of the inspectors of manufactures, by making their remuneration partially dependent on local fees.

Disastrous to his plans as it was, the Dutch war was of necessity approved by Colbert and sprang directly from the very core of his type of mercantilism. If commerce, shipping, industry, and the supply of bullion were all static, as Colbert believed, if one nation could make gains only from the losses of another, then indeed the Dutch were the mortal enemies of France, because of their peculiar and dominant position in the seventeenth century. At them must be aimed taxes and tariffs, companies and industrial subsidies, and such steps were bound to drive the Dutch to a vigorous defense of their supremacy. Colbert welcomed the Dutch war in 1672; he had started it much earlier. To put it succinctly, Colbert's mercantilism needed peace for its progress, but it made war inevitable.

Colbert's belief in a static economy further impaired the success of his policies by making them appropriate to a static economy, when actually the economic life of the world was changing rapidly. It is probable that his industrial regulations, though simple and flexible in his hands, became brakes on the wheel of progress under his more literal-minded successors. It is possible that his attitude on some innovations, as for instance the introduction of half-beaver hats or the use of the frame for woolen stockings, may have retarded progress,



though it is reasonably clear that his contributions to new techniques in textile manufacture, mirror-making, dyeing, and so forth, advanced French technology to a great degree. Colbert's support of the guilds did probably serve to perpetuate in France a type of industrial organization that became increasingly unsuitable in the eighteenth century. But if these factors may have served to reduce the permanent value of Colbert's work, they are probably as nothing compared to the basis he laid for the industrial and commercial supremacy of France in the succeeding century.

It is clear that down to 1763, at least, and possibly down to 1789, France led the world in its volume of industrial production, of foreign commerce, and of domestic trade. While this may have been due in part to factors such as the geographical location, the resources, the population, and the government of France, it seems reasonable to suppose that it was also due in good part to the tremendous impetus given French industry and commerce by the work of Colbert. That the supremacy of France was not more marked and more permanent may be attributed to a variety of factors for many of which Colbert was not responsible and some of which he would undoubtedly have disapproved—the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which gave to all Europe so many of the industrial techniques which Colbert had patiently acquired for France; the continual wars, which absorbed so much of the resources and man power of France and eventually lost her a good part of Colbert's colonial empire; the neglect of sea power, which opened the road for English domination; the hardening of Colbertism as French officialdom, dazzled by the example of Colbert, followed his policies with a somewhat uninspired emulation. It is true that the wars were due, at least in part, to the economic nationalism and colonial and commercial rivalry which Colbert had fostered. His mercantilism bred a counter-mercantilism in many lands. But, on the other hand, it is also true that Colbert's system by its very nature was tied to the efficiency, the power, and the popularity of the French monarchy, and that their decay was bound to impair the effectiveness of his system.

It is not too much, however, to attribute to Colbert's work some permanent effects. They are to be sought not only in specific institutions, created in whole or in part by him, which have endured into the twentieth century—the state tobacco monopoly, the Gobelins, the Saint-Gobain Company, and the like—but also in certain trends and

tendencies. The long perpetuation of French supremacy in styles and in luxury goods, the survival of small-scale business, a somewhat greater willingness to protect the consumer than that displayed by other countries, the neo-mercantilism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the economic controls by the state, and the actual state ownership of various enterprises may all be in some degree part of the French heritage from Colbert.

A study of Colbert leads one inevitably to wish to evaluate French mercantilism in particular and mercantilism in general, though there are many pertinent questions that cannot be answered. There will, for example, have to be much more work done on Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch mercantilism before it will be possible to say with any assurance how much of French mercantilism was home-grown and how much of it was imported from other countries. A vital difference between French and English mercantilism is, on the other hand, easy to detect. After 1660 and even earlier, English mercantilism was in good part the result of pressure from business groups with specific ends in view. The shipowners, the woolen manufacturers, the iron masters, the hat-makers, the West India planters, and other fairly well organized interests were able to obtain specific legislation in their favor; and out of this specific legislation was built the rather ungainly structure of the English mercantile and colonial system.

In France the same process is observable, but to a much less notable degree, particularly in the time of Colbert. To use an inexact figure of speech, the English business interests were a batch of squalling children crying for candy and getting it from a somewhat inattentive mother, Parliament. The French business interests, less vocal though no less childlike, were made to behave in a manner which a more attentive mother—the royal government—believed to be for the best interests of all concerned.

This difference may be more apparent than real. The English bourgeoisie had to bring its influence to bear on a public institution, Parliament, in a semipublic manner. The French bourgeoisie could gain its ends by backstairs influence, private meetings with officials, and all the subtlety and intrigue that goes with the court of an absolute monarch. But the fact remains that many of the French mercantilist enactments seem to have been handed down from above, rather than demanded from below. It might be worthwhile, even, to call the French

developments "royal mercantilism," to mark the difference. There is much evidence that Colbert consulted merchants, especially the important ones of Paris. There is little proof that the merchants influenced him in the major outlines of his policy. His close advisers—most of them bourgeois no doubt—shaped many of his enactments. But it is easier to show that Colbert influenced Savary than to demonstrate that Savary influenced Colbert.

The case of the East India Companies is instructive. In England the company was formed by merchants, with some royal encouragement. It grew to be powerful, a bone of contention in Parliament, a source of controversy in economics, and a powerful factor in legislation. In France the company was formed by the king (Colbert), with some coöperation from merchants. It was run to a large degree by the government, and if the policies of state were shaped to aid it, its own course was guided to a large extent by what were deemed to be national interests.

The fact that French mercantilism was dominated by the royal government does not necessarily mean that it did not work for the interests of the bourgeoisie. It often did, and its net result was probably to strengthen that class. Yet when it was organized and administered by an officialdom which sought and aimed to serve the interests of the nation as a whole, under a monarch who was definitely not desirous of serving the bourgeois class more than others, it is probably incorrect to think of mercantilism in France as a class instrument or to attempt to interpret it as part of a class struggle, or to hold, even, that it sprang exclusively from the needs of the bourgeoisie, as a class. Colbert certainly regarded his work as national, and he spent more time trying to whip a reluctant bourgeoisie into line than he did in trying to forward the interests of any class. Indeed the fact that the king symbolized the nation, and that Colbert thought of himself as a royal servant, made most of his efforts truly national ones.

It is certainly true that Colbertism tended to exalt industry and commerce, though agriculture was by no means ignored. It is ironic, therefore, that France has remained to a large degree agricultural, while England, which by the corn laws in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries strongly aided agriculture, has become so predominantly industrial and commercial. It is also interesting to speculate as to whether the physiocrats were not in large part merely a reaction

against the undue emphasis of Colbertism on industry and trade. Perhaps their theories might be interpreted as "better no government intervention than that which does not exalt agriculture." There are indications, however, that the government policies toward industry, commerce, and agriculture, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, may, in some subtle way, have been related to the price changes. Recent researches<sup>1</sup> in France seem to show that the tremendous price rise inaugurated by the influx of precious metals in the sixteenth century ended about 1650, that during the last half century of the rise the prices of manufactured goods went up much more than those of agricultural products, that the century after 1650 was one of stationary or declining prices, and that the prices of agricultural products in this later period held up better than those of manufactured goods. The relative change between the prices of agricultural and those of manufactured products may have some bearing on the emphasis on commerce and industry in the seventeenth century and the emphasis of the physiocrats on agriculture, though it is worth noting in each case that the emphasis reached its height after the price movement which may have caused it had ended. But no simple explanation should be sought in prices, for the price of textiles, which were so dear to Colbert's heart, rose less and stopped rising sooner than other goods, in the great price revolution of 1500-1650.

Whatever the basic reasons behind the fact, Colbertism, by fostering industry and commerce, probably aided the growth of capitalism. The commercial companies, the large-scale industrial plants, the subsidies, the tariffs, and the growth of colonial and over-sea trade all tended to improve the capitalistic techniques, to increase the accumulation of capital, to consolidate the position of capitalistic entrepreneurs, and to stimulate the capitalistic spirit. But the support of the guilds, the regulation of industry, the state-owned enterprises, and the continual intervention by the government may to some degree have retarded the growth of capitalism. In so far as he did foster capitalism, Colbert seems to have done it unwittingly, and he might have regarded the large-scale capitalist enterprises of the eighteenth century with some dismay, since he preferred individual to company management where the former was practicable.

<sup>1</sup> F. Simiand, *Recherches anciennes et nouvelles sur le mouvement général des prix du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, pp. 191-201.

It is, perhaps, proper, though probably fruitless, to inquire whether mercantilism in general, and in its manifestations under Colbert, was adapted to the ends it sought, and to the conditions of the time. The question is fundamentally unanswerable, since there is no way of telling how *laissez faire* or syndicalism or the single tax would have worked in the seventeenth century. Some aspects of the matter are, however, worthy of note. From the time of the physiocrats and Adam Smith, the bullionism of the mercantilists was attacked and ridiculed as both unsound and naïve. Yet it is possible that the bullionism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was based on real needs and on the peculiar conditions of the time. To put it another way, bullionism may have been a perfectly tenable approach to the hard-money economy which was transitional between the barter economy of the Middle Ages and the credit economy of the last two centuries.

As long as taxes were collected in actual gold and silver coin, Colbert's insistence that each province of the nation must have its stock of precious metals may have been sound. As long as wars were financed in large part on a pay-as-you-go basis (and the Dutch war was, to a great degree), it may have been necessary to have large quantities of gold and silver in a country so that its monetary resources might be quickly mobilized for the war effort. As long as troops were paid, diplomats bribed, and allies subsidized in coin, it was probably well for a nation to have a substantial stock of it. The justice of this view is perhaps indicated by the common practice of melting down plate and jewelry to help finance a seventeenth-century war. Finally, as long as a large proportion of business was transacted in coin, it is quite likely that the amount of money in a country had a significant effect on general prosperity, as well as on the price level.

If there is any validity in this approach to the problem, it may give a clue to the rise and decline and rebirth of bullionism, and thus to some degree of mercantilism as a whole. The adherence to bullionism would then be a function of the importance of coin for business, for government, and for war. As this importance declined in the eighteenth century before the increasing use of paper money, government bonds, and a wide variety of credit instruments, the tenets of bullionism ceased to be so valid and the whole school of thought came under attack. There ensued a transitional period, in which there was much justice in the *laissez faire* point of view, for gold and silver stocks, if depleted,

could easily be replaced for practical purposes by paper of one sort or another, and even if seriously depleted were still ample to serve as the base for a credit structure. Then toward the end of the nineteenth century a new situation arose, in which the credit structure had been reared so high that gold took on a new value as a basis for credit. This phenomenon was obscured in the years before the Great War by the flow of new gold from South Africa. But it was bared in the post-war years by the further growth of the credit structure, and led anew to bullionist tactics, as each nation strove to secure an ample gold basis for its money and credit, and was driven to devaluation to raise the ratio of hard money to paper. Such an interpretation is open to a wide variety of criticisms. Yet it is not impossible that it contains some kernel of truth.

Indeed the reversion to mercantilist policies, which began on a world-wide scale about 1870, would seem to point to the fact that *laissez faire* policies were of a transitional nature. They were, perhaps, appropriate especially to England, but even there for only a relatively brief period—that in which England led the world so far, through her early industrialization, that her business needed little government aid or support. To put it another way, perhaps given nationalism, economic nationalism (mercantilism) is a normal concomitant and will occur with nationalism save in special circumstances. Quite possibly the mercantilism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries should be regarded as the logical result of three conditions: the rising tide of nationalism, that accompanied the formation of national states in western Europe; the centralization of governmental functions (*étatisme*) that was part of this movement; and the hard-money economy, which was the transitional stage between the barter of the earlier and the credit of the later period, and which was induced or at least accelerated by the influx of precious metals from overseas.

Such a view of mercantilism is probably too simple. But it is at least more realistic than the idea of Adam Smith and of his successors in the nineteenth century that mercantilism was a congeries of unsound theories, flourishing in the absence of true knowledge of political economy, propounded by men lacking in insight, practiced by despotic governments, and yielding, almost invariably, unfortunate results.

Though mercantilism is so broad and so loose a term that it seems to defy definition, still it is perhaps ill-advised to close a work on the

subject without some attempt at definition. The following may not be too far amiss:

*Mercantilism is a term which may be applied to those theories, policies, and practices, arising from the conditions of the time, by which the national state, acting in the economic sphere, sought to increase its own power, wealth, and prosperity.*

The definition, like the term mercantilism, is too loose and too broad. But this whole book is an attempt to show how complex, how widespread, how traditional, how uncoördinated, how systematized, how natural, how artificial, how successful, how unsuccessful was the mercantilism of a single country in a single century. It is perhaps the perfect tribute to Colbert that French mercantilism must be considered as more or less embryonic before him and more or less decadent after him, and that for a definition of French mercantilism one can scarce do better than to say:

*Mercantilism in France means that group of theories, policies, and practices arising from the traditions of the country and the conditions of the time, and upheld and applied by Jean-Baptiste Colbert during his years in office, 1661-83, in his effort to secure for the nation, and for the king who symbolized it, power, wealth, and prosperity.*

## APPENDICES





# I: THE DEMANDS OF THE ENGLISH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ANGLO-FRENCH COMMERCIAL TREATY

THE FOLLOWING documents are to be found in "Mélanges de Colbert," No. 34, fols. 3-4, 68-83.

Only those sections included within quotation marks are direct translations. The rest are summarized from the French.

## I. SOME OF THE DEMANDS OF THE ENGLISH, THE REMARKS OF COLBERT, AND THE OPINIONS OF THE PARISIAN MERCHANTS WHOSE ADVICE WAS SOUGHT (UNDATED)

<i>Remarks of Colbert</i>	<i>Request of the English</i>	<i>Advice of the Merchants of Paris</i>
1		
"The harm that this favor would do to the manufactures of France must be examined."	"Reduction of the duties on their manufactures to the rates prevailing before the tariff of 1664."	"Although the manufactures [of those] things from England, which are those of colored cloth, serges, and wool stockings, have not profited much by the increase in import duties, because there always has come in a great quantity of foreign goods by fraud; it is agreed, none the less, that a reduction of duties would injure them and would decrease the consumption of them; but if, on the other hand, one considers the advantages that commerce in general will receive if one removes in England the prohibition of all our manufactures, one finds that the reduction of duties could only be very advantageous."
3		
"The English affirm that no inspection of French manufactures is made in England."	"Exemption from all inspections for English manufactures."	"It is easy enough to maintain that our manufactures are not inspected in England, since they are prohibited there. It is true that removing those prohibitions, as the King of England offers to do, it is a thing to arrange for the future. But it is of very great importance, since this exemption would cause abuses; it would overthrow all the ordinances and all the efforts that have been made to establish order and to improve the manufactures of the kingdom; the English, being able to bring in goods of such size and quality as they wished."

*Remarks of Colbert**Request of the  
English**Advice of the Merchants of Paris*

Find out how much came in in 1664.

Reduction of new duties on manufactures of Jersey and Guernsey.

This refers to woolen stockings, which paid 50 *sous* a dozen before 1664 and 9 *livres* after that date. The French manufacturers would suffer by such a reduction, although great quantities come in by fraud.

6

The King of England offers to free the French of taxes laid on them as foreigners and to remove the prohibitions of French manufactures.

"The two things are very advantageous and will bring a considerable benefit to the commerce of France. To get them in full, that is to say, without excepting any manufacture of the kingdom, one could grant many things to the English, since they get considerably more of our goods than we of theirs."

## 2. "TRANSLATION FROM THE ENGLISH"

"The humble remonstrances made to the Lords Commissioners appointed by the king of Great Britain for the treaty of commerce with France:

By the principal English merchants trading in that kingdom, on their own part and in behalf of all their confreres, November 29, 1674."

The merchants thanked the Lords Commissioners for their interest in commerce. In fulfillment of their order asking for views on the projected treaty of commerce with France, the merchants proposed that the treaty should include the following articles:

(1) Confirmation of all earlier treaties, where these were not specifically superseded by this one.

(2) English merchants in all parts of France to be allowed to travel about freely, to enjoy the rights of bourgeois, to need no safe-conduct, to be allowed to import and export goods as freely as the French, and especially to be permitted to bring in all woolens, silks, and cloths of silk and wool mixed, without having the fabrics inspected as to size, quality, and so forth.

(3) French customs duties to be decreased to the 1666 level. In the future, no increase in the taxes on the importation or consumption of English goods. English merchants to pay only the same tolls and duties within France as paid by the French.

(4) Abolition of the French tax of 50 *sous* a ton on foreign ships. At the very least, an English ship going to two French ports to be required to pay the tax only once.

(5) English ships going up the Garonne to Bordeaux, to pay only the taxes provided for in the treaty of 1653.

(6) All letters of marque to be repealed and no new ones to be issued.

(7) All reprisals and decrees granted by the French in favor of Launay, Cadeau, and Lasson to be voided. No new ones to be granted against English

merchants for the offenses of other Englishmen, but only against the persons actually guilty of doing injury to a French citizen. Even in such cases, the Frenchman seizing English goods to post a bond, until the settlement of the case.

(8) English ships forced into French harbors by bad weather or pursuit by enemies to pay no taxes at all.

(9) English ships not to be forced to take on goods against the wishes of the master or owner.

(10) English ships to be allowed to trade freely with the enemies of France and to take thither grain, fish, and other provisions, as well as lead, sugar, tobacco, and all other goods not specifically enumerated as contraband by the treaty.

(11) Free ships to make free goods, and French to stop English ships only to make sure that they are English.

(12) English not to be taxed as foreigners in France, and to pay only the same levies as the French.

(13) Testimony of Englishmen to be accepted in French courts, as testimony of Frenchmen is accepted in English courts.

(14) English merchants and shipmasters to be free in all parts of France to carry on business without using brokers, interpreters, or others as intermediaries, and without the payment of any fees to such persons. If an English ship perpetrates a customs fraud, only those goods passed illegally to be seized, the ship and its cargo not to be interfered with.

(15) No *droit d'aubaine* to be levied on any English subjects.

(16) In case of war, English merchants to have six months in which to leave France.

(17) In each of the chief ports and cities of each kingdom, two French merchants and two English to be chosen, as provided by the treaty of 1606, to see that other merchants enjoy all their rights and to settle disputes.

(18) This treaty to be verified in all the courts of France.

#### ARGUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE ABOVE ARTICLES AND TO ANSWER THE OBJECTIONS OF THE FRENCH MINISTERS OF STATE

The main idea of the articles was to secure equality of treatment for both nations, since the merchants were sure that, given such equality, they could hold their own.

The arguments presented in behalf of the proposed articles were:

*Article 1.*—This is a customary article in such treaties.

*Article 2.*—As to the rights of bourgeois: These are necessary for the English merchant in Paris and he has to secure at great expense, naturalization as a Frenchman. The French may argue that the local rights of the cities cannot be impaired. But mutual advantage demands certain sacrifices. The English, if they wished to take the same attitude as the French, could exclude French merchants from London.

As to freeing English textiles from inspection by the French: It is only from the sale of English manufactured goods that the English can secure "any considerable benefit" from commerce with France. It is very important not to have English goods inspected on the pretext "of certain old statutes made in France for the regulation of the cloth trade. French officials have often taken English cloth and thrown it into the water, by which it has been rendered unsaleable [this probably refers to the tests devised by Colbert to ascertain whether textiles were properly dyed] and the same thing might happen again, which would be as capable of destroying our trade as a prohibition [of our goods]."

As to the fact that French textiles are subject to these inspections and that freeing English goods from inspection might give the latter an unfair advantage: "Laws and statutes of this nature are properly made in each country to preserve and to improve its own manufactures, and not to regulate the cloth trade of other countries. The King of France can make such laws as he wishes in the matter of manufactures of his own kingdom, so that they may gain in esteem and in reputation, but we say with all respect that we do not believe that His Majesty can impose them on the English: these can make such manufactures and of such sort as seems good to them, and it is only for the buyers to beware as to what they buy. If the English do not make as good goods as the French, they will lose the sale and the French will gain the advantage."

In any event, the purpose of the French regulations is not "so much to regulate the cloth trade of France, nor to preserve the quality of the cloth of England, as to ruin and destroy the commerce of the latter country."

As to the rest of the article, the French at Bordeaux prevent the English from trading, save each for his own account. This prevents the English from training up and employing English agents and seriously hampers their business.

*Article 3.*—If the customs duties are not reduced, the English will not be able to sell any goods in France, "a thing which, as you can see by the balance of trade attached hereto, will by the continuation of trade with France do a daily injury to the substance of our nation, in view of the great excess of our importations over our exportations."

As to what would be a proper rate for the French customs duties, "5 percent of the just value of the goods would be a reasonable proposition. The silks and linens taken from France into England, which greatly exceed in value our manufactures taken to France, are on the average taxed only at that rate." The nominal English rates are frequently higher, but the goods are undervalued, thus in effect reducing the rate.

The French will make the following objections to any reduction in their customs duties:

Objection 1: The English king has laid heavy duties on French wines and

brandies, which reduce the sale thereof and lower the price paid to the French.

Answer 1: On the contrary, since these higher duties were instituted, the French have received higher prices and sold much more wine and brandy to England.

(1) From Michaelmas, 1663, to Michaelmas, 1664, only 6,828 *tonneaux* of French wines were brought into the port of London, and so little brandy was brought in as "not even to merit mention."

(2) From Michaelmas, 1667, to Michaelmas, 1669, 17,000 *tonneaux* of wine and 3,000 *tonneaux* of brandy were brought into London from France.

(3) From Michaelmas, 1672, to Michaelmas, 1674, 22,500 *tonneaux* of wine were brought into London from France.

(4) From Michaelmas, 1671, to Michaelmas, 1673, 7,315 *tonneaux* of brandy were brought into London from France, and since the latter date more than 5,000 *tonneaux* of brandy have come in.

(5) As to price, in 1667, the year before the high taxes were put into effect in England, a *tonneau* of French wine laid down on board ship brought only 43 *écus*. Since then the prices have risen thus:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Ecus</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Ecus</i>
1668	43	1671	53
1669	47	1672	50
1670	54	1673	56

And in the present year, 1674, a *tonneau* costs on board ship, 70 *écus*.

All sorts of claret wines have risen 50 percent in price since 1667.

So the English taxes are paid only by the English and the French do not suffer from them at all.

Answer 2: "And secondly, we respond that the taxes levied in England on these commodities cannot properly be used as objections to prevent the reduction of those levied in France on the manufactures of England, since the quantity of these manufactures transported into France is already not only equaled but greatly surpassed by the quantity of those of France that are taken into England; so that the wines and brandies remain on a separate basis, and the French alone have the advantage of them against the English."

Objection 2: The French ministers may say that a reduction of the customs duties will ruin French manufactures.

Answer: "On which we beg to be permitted to say that without this reduction not only will the manufactures of England decline, but also the substance of the nation will be consumed and dissipated, as a result of a destructive inequality of commerce."

The reduction should be on the basis of "mutual and reciprocal parity," rather than merely putting the French duties back to the basis of 1664, 1654, 1606, or any other date since then. The French tariff duties have been raised over the course of years thus:

## French duties on large English cloths, per piece:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Livres</i>	<i>Sous</i>
1632 . . . . .	6	12
1644 . . . . .	9	
1654 . . . . .	30	
1664 . . . . .	40	
1667 . . . . .	80	

## French duties on English serges, per piece:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Livres</i>	<i>Sous</i>
1632 . . . . .	1	12
1654 . . . . .	5	
1664 . . . . .	6	
1667 . . . . .	12	

The present small consumption of English manufactures in France would be increased somewhat by a return to the rates of 1664, and somewhat more by a return to the rates of 1654. But neither of these reductions would procure any just proportion between the industry of England and that of France, nor prevent the capital of the English from decreasing through their trade with France.

*Article 3, part 2.*—It is necessary to stop the French from raising their tariff duties at will, in contravention of the treaty of 1606. Also "by a decree of the Council of the king of France, there was made a certain agreement between the makers and the merchants of stockings that the former will sell only to the latter, and the latter will buy only from their own manufacturers: by means of which the trade in English stockings has been entirely ruined, and the same may be done in regard to other manufactures, because such agreements or regulations, being once tolerated or authorized, are equivalent to a prohibition and have the same effect that it would have."

*Article 3, part 3.*—This section must be insisted on, since the English trading at Bordeaux have to pay about 6 percent more than the French on the goods they bring in. It may be objected that this is because of special privileges granted to bourgeois of that city. But we reply that if it were simply a matter of such inconsiderable taxes as the English towns levy to pay for cleaning the streets and the like, the tax at Bordeaux might be considered the equivalent of those paid by the French in England. Instead, the levy there is a real customs duty and the proceeds from it are paid to the king.

*Article 4.*—On the 50-sous-a-ton duty levied on foreign ships by the French: The English charge a similar duty, but only once. Therefore an English ship touching at two French ports successively should pay this tax but once.

*Article 8.*—This article is important, since English ships, forced by the

weather or by pursuit to put into French ports, now have to pay large sums. They run the risk of being forced to pay customs duties and of having their cargoes confiscated.

*Article 9.*—English ships at Morlaix and other French ports are forced to take on and transport French goods.

*Article 18.*—If the treaty is not registered in all the French courts, every time an Englishman is involved in a case before a different court, he will have to appeal to the Council of State to order that court to register the treaty.

*Articles 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, and 17* are taken from earlier treaties.

*The remainder of the document, translated from the French as literally as possible:*

"Balance of trade, as it is carried on at present through the exchange of products coming from, and manufactures of, the two kingdoms, calculated as exactly as has been possible by order of the Lords-Commissioner of Great Britain for the treaty with France:

Quantities	Taken from England into France	Sums in Pounds	
	Manufactures of Wool and of Silk	Sterling	Total
354	Pieces of Norwich cloth, at £2 the piece	708	
5,564	Pieces of serge and <i>perpetuanes</i> [?], at 50s.	13,910	
2,228	Pieces of single bays, at 50s.	5,764	
166	Pieces of small <i>miniquins</i> [?] bays, at £6	996	
466	Pieces of small double bays, at £4	1,864	
2,140	Dozens of men's woolen stockings, at 40s.	4,280	
832	Dozens of men's woolen stockings, at 25s.	1,040	
1,170	Dozens of children's woolen stockings, at 8s.	468	
400	<i>Verges</i> of flannel, at 12d.	20	
1,200	Bales of cotton, at £9 the hundred	10,800	
112	Long pieces of cloth, at £10	1,120	
42	Short pieces of cloth, at £8	336	
829	Pieces of Spanish cloth, at £15	12,435	
97	Dozens of cloth of Nort, double, at £5	485	
69	Dozens of cloth of Nort, single, at £2	138	
13	Dozens of Devonshire cloth, at £2	26	
173	Pieces of ordinary or common cloth, at £5	865	
6	Pieces of Kensington cloth, at £3	18	
3,585	Pieces of <i>crepé</i> [?], at 35s.	6,273	
960	Pounds of worked-up silk, at 40s.	1,920	
		63,466	

That is all that was taken from the port of London to France, according to the books of the customs house, from Michaelmas, 1668, to Michaelmas, 1669. And from all the rest of England together we calculate one-third [of that amount], which raises the total to 84,621 84,621, 6s. 8d.

We believe that since 1669 the exportation has decreased, instead of increasing.



Quantities	Taken from England into France	Sums in Pounds	Total
		Sterling	
2,500	Loads of lead, at £12	30,000	
6,000	Hundredweights of tin, at £4	24,000	
100	Tons of alum, at £24	2,400	
	Calfskins and leather	10,000	
	Various sorts of skins, cole [sic], horns for lanterns, butter, copperas, old shoes, coal, tobacco pipes, gloves, red chalk, flaxseed, candles, ironware, minor merchandise, and other commodities, which might amount altogether annually to	20,000	86,400
			<u>171,021, 6s. 8d.</u>

Quantities	Taken from France into England	Sums in Pounds	Total
	<i>Lingns [Toiles] and Silks</i>	Sterling	
60,000	Pieces of lockram and <i>toile de doulas</i> [?], at £6	360,000	
17,000	Bales of royal linens, canvas of Vitré, at £6	102,000	
5,000	Bales of Normandy canvas, at £7	35,000	
2,500	Pieces of <i>toile de quintin</i> [?], at 10s.	1,250	
1,500	Pieces of calico prints [ <i>toiles peintes</i> ], at 20s.	1,500	
7,604	<i>Verges</i> of linen for tablecloths, at 2s.	760 8s.	
33,896	<i>Verges</i> of linen for napkins, at 1s.	1,694 16s.	
1,376	Dozens of buckrams, at 50s.	3,440	
1,200	Bolts of poldanis [?], at 15s.	900	
150,000	Pounds of manufactures of silk, at 40s.	300,000	
280,000	Pairs of <i>bi:ux</i> [?] shrouds, at 5s.	705 [sic]	

*Note:* that in this present year, 1674, there was received at Dover as customs duties on silk manufactures alone £15,000 sterling, so that considering what goes in surreptitiously and that a very great quantity may be worth from £3 up to £4 sterling the pound, we believe that the value of the manufactures of silk may amount to much more than we say hereabove

807,250, 4s.

11,000	<i>Tonneaux</i> of French wines, as an annual average, at £12, 10s. the <i>tonneau</i> cost	137,500	
4,000	<i>Tonneaux</i> of brandy, also an annual average, at £20 the <i>tonneau</i>	80,000	
			<u>217,500</u>
160,000	Reams of paper, at 5s.	40,000	
1,500	Cases of prunes, at £4	6,000	
400	Hundredweight of feathers, at £5	2,000	
5,000	Hundredweight of goatskins, at £3	15,000	

<i>Quantities</i>	<i>Taken from France into England</i>	<i>Sums in Pounds Sterling</i>	<i>Total</i>
3,000	Weights or loads of salt, at £2	6,000	
6,000	Hundredweights of resin, at 8s.	2,400	
	Wine vinegar, <i>wate</i> [?], cork, tar, turpentine, soap, capers, olives, Brignole prunes, parchment, window glass, carding combs, wheat, fans, osier withes, Bouÿ wood [?], tartar, and so forth, which may amount annually to	40,000	11,400 [sic for 111,400]
			1,136,150, 4s.

Besides all sorts of baubles and trinkets for women and children, fans, jasmine gloves, lace and embroidery, clothes, and richly embroidered beds, which amount to an incredible sum.

"By the balance hereabove, you can see that merely the manufactures of silk and linen brought from France into England amount to more than 800,000 pounds sterling; and that those of wool and silk brought from England to France do not amount to 85,000. As also that all the other commodities coming from England, together with all its manufactures taken to France, do not amount to 90,000 pounds more; while the wines, brandies and other commodities produced by France, and the manufactures of France taken into England, amount to more than 320,000 pounds sterling, beside an incredible sum to which the articles of clothing, rich ornaments, lace, embroidery, and so forth, total; whence it is evident that the exportation of our commodities and our manufactures to France is less in value by more than 1,000,000 pounds sterling than the importation of those of France into England. And if you please to reflect on the matter, you will recognize readily the great injury the English nation has suffered and the notable advantage the French secure daily, by holding the treaty in suspense as they do, our nation being, after a fashion, excluded from trade with France, while they enjoy all advantages, and as great advantages as they could reasonably expect from any treaty whatever."

## II: THE PROJECTED COLONY OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AT MADAGASCAR

AN INTERESTING document is to be found in the first eleven folios of "Manuscripts français," No. 6104. It bears the title: *Advis qu'un particulier prend la liberté de donner à Messieurs les Directeurs de la compagnie des Indes Orientales, au sujet de l'établissement d'une colonie à Madagascar, et ce qu'il estime devoir être observé pour parvenir à la fin de leur desseins*. It consists of twenty-two pages clearly written. It dates, apparently, from the spring of 1664, when plans for the East India Company were being matured, but had not as yet been given a definite form. As to its authorship, there is no clue. It was probably presented to Colbert, and the marginal comments may well be his or even those of the king. It contains thirty-six articles of advice as to the foundation of a colony on Madagascar. They are significant, because a number of them were actually put into practice, and because they give a good idea of the colonial theories of the time.

The articles of this *mémoire* may be summarized as follows:

1. Give free passage to all those who wish to go to Madagascar. Take their baggage and tools free. Then let them pay off the debt to the company they have thus incurred, over a space of five years, without any interest charges.

2. Distribute to the colonists who reach Madagascar as much land as they will undertake to cultivate. Give them natives of the island as slaves, or if necessary import slaves for them. Let the value of the slaves be also considered as a loan without interest.

3. If a colonist, through laziness, leaves his land uncultivated for three years, the company should take it away from him and give it to someone else. [Marginal comment: "bon."]

4. For ten years let there be no taxes on the colonists. After that time let them pay tithes to the Church and taxes for the expenses of governing the island and for the benefit of the company.

5. To "rich and powerful folk" give large areas of land, as fiefs with feudal rights of justice, so that they may use their energy and wealth to create for themselves "fine estates and possessions." This will save money for the company. The king should promise letters of nobility to those who keep fifty slaves busy cultivating the soil for two years. [Marginal comment: *à examiner.*"]

6. By the "first ships" the company should send out artisans of all sorts, so that the colony may supply its own needs.

7. Let the colonists, subject to regulations by the company, take wood and other building materials from the most convenient places, free of charge.

8. Let hunting and fishing be free to all, subject to regulations established by the company.

9. If any one discovers a mine of gold, silver, or other mineral, let him enjoy the proprietorship of it, paying to the company  $\frac{1}{10}$  of the product in the first year,  $\frac{1}{6}$  in the second,  $\frac{1}{6}$  in the third,  $\frac{1}{4}$  in the fourth,  $\frac{1}{6}$  in the fifth,  $\frac{1}{6}$  in the sixth, and thereafter.

10. All artisans who work six years in the colony should be granted the status of master in any city except Paris, on their return to France. For Paris ten years' work should be required.

11. Let the company take into its warehouses the crops and products of all the colonists and pay them therefor in goods from Europe. But the company should deduct each year, for five years, one-fifth of what each colonist owes it, thus extinguishing the debt.

12. "Since the transplantation of a sufficient number of women to the aforesaid island would be difficult, permit the Frenchmen who go there, and even encourage them (aside from the distribution of lands) by a bounty from the company of thirty or forty *écus* in money to each, to marry women of the aforesaid island after their conversion to our religion, as was practiced happily at Goa by Albuquerque, so as both to incorporate and tame the inhabitants by these alliances with us and to create in a short time a considerable colony." [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

13. The descendants of the new inhabitants of this island to be reputed native Frenchmen even though of mixed blood.

14. "That no regular judges, lawyers, or prosecutors be sent there, to avoid the introduction of trickery; and that disputes be settled without appeal, for matters under 1,000 *livres*, by the *juges-consuls* of the merchants, and, in case of appeal, by the *conseil souverain*, which will be sent to the aforesaid island." [Marginal comment: "*Très bon.*"]

15. The company should send ecclesiastics and teachers of "good life and manners" to "edify the souls of the French," convert the natives, and educate the youth. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

16. Introduce the gold, silver, and minor currency of France, to facilitate commerce and to avoid the difficulties of barter. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

17. On the island, allow no vines, olives, flax, or hemp to be planted. "Let no one establish there any considerable manufacture of things which are made or can be made in France"; for if this were permitted, it would ruin the investment of the company and "oblige the company to transport from France gold and silver, a thing to be avoided as much as possible for numerous reasons." [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

18. Let trade with Madagascar be free to all Frenchmen, upon payment of a 10 percent duty to the company. At least, permit the inhabitants of the island to trade with neighboring lands and with India, since this would lead to explorations and discoveries. [Marginal comment: "*à examiner.*"]

19. To protect the company, the king should support "in its seas" forty warships and ten galleys, to prevent foreigners from harming his subjects; and he should be ready to make speedy reprisals, especially against the Dutch, who seek to keep all others off the sea. The Dutch make it a practice to sink the ships of competitors and are ready enough to pay damages, so long as they keep other people out. Therefore "it is expedient secretly to swell and increase by 50 or even by 100 percent the invoices and bills of lading of the cargoes" that are sent to the Indies, "so as to have the where-withal to console oneself in case of an unfortunate encounter with those opposed to the establishment that is proposed, and to disgust them by the high damages." [Marginal comment: "*bon,*" followed by three illegible words.]

20. Chief power should be given at Madagascar to a single individual, but good order, military affairs, and commerce should be watched over by a *conseil souverain* of seven honest and experienced persons. On them will depend the success of the company. [Marginal comment: "*Nil Nisi Consilio.*"]

21. As the Dutch have had trouble with their agents in the Indies, the French, with stronger opposition to meet, should be extremely careful in the selection of theirs. The directors should choose able, honest men, and not "their relatives or followers." [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

22. Try to buy or get control of Madeira, or one of the Azores, or some other such island, to use as a rendezvous for the Indies fleet. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

23. Introduce, so far as possible, the use of our linens into Madagascar and the East Indies. Let people know that "their coolness is more suitable and natural to temper the heat of their climate than the cotton of which they make use." [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

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24. Send out stallions to Madagascar and use them to conquer the country. They will work miracles among natives unused to horses, as they did for the Spanish in America. Then raise horses and export them to the East Indies. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

25. Since Madagascar is in about the same climate as Chile and Peru, try to introduce the useful vicuna, of which the wool is in great demand in France for making hats.

26. Follow the example of the Portuguese and send out on each ship two or three educated criminals. Promise them rewards and oblivion as to their crimes, if they make useful explorations and discoveries.

27. Since the company will have to make big gifts to the rulers in the Indies, its agents should follow the example of the Portuguese and turn over to it any gifts they receive.

28. To restrain officials of the company, do as the Portuguese do. Send out new ones every three years, to hear complaints against the old ones. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

29. Give "honorable salaries" to the directors of the company, to repay them for their trouble. Otherwise, they will get more out of the company by giving employment to their relatives. [Marginal comment: "*à examiner.*"]

30. But a fixed salary would not stimulate the directors. Give them, instead, 2 percent on the value of all goods sent out or brought in, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  percent on all money. But make them pay their secretaries and clerks out of these sums.

31. Let the king establish the death penalty for any trickery in connection with the company's accounts, records, or transactions. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

32. The directors should not form a "cabal" to get their followers employed or to secure the passage of any resolution. Rather, each should always give his own honest opinion. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

33. No director should establish any personal relationship or connection with any employee of the company.

34. In all matters of importance, each director should be required to give his advice in writing, over his signature, for purposes of record.

35. The directors should choose two or three of their number to have charge of "the soul of the business and the secret of very important things." These special directors should have authority to give orders and settle matters, as is done in the companies of the English, the Dutch, and the Portuguese.

36. Have fine paper with the arms of the company made. Let all its agents use this paper for their correspondence accounts and reports. Then have these bound up at the end of each year. Avoid, so far as possible, a multiplicity of books. [Marginal comment: "*bon.*"]

### III: THE MANUFACTURES OF FRANCE, 1692-93

IN ANY attempt to understand the economic history of the seventeenth century there are many difficulties, but the most serious of them all is the lack of adequate statistics. To write of the economic life of a nation when the amount of its imports and exports, the size of its industrial production, the figures of its currency and its credit structure, and the number of its population even, must be guessed at from scanty and insufficient material, is a heartbreaking task.

These considerations apply to the economic history of France in the seventeenth century, as clearly as they do to that of any other country. For this reason, any addition to the available statistical data takes on a peculiar importance. Facts and figures which would be cast aside as woefully inadequate by a historian dealing with the nineteenth century or the twentieth come like treasure-trove when they are from the seventeenth.

It is from this point of view that one must consider a document which is preserved in the vast series G<sup>7</sup> in the Archives Nationales in Paris. It is to be found in carton 1685. It consists of ninety-four pages, closely written, in a single hand, and in outline form. It is a summary of the state of manufacturing in France, compiled in 1693, ten years after the death of Colbert, from reports most of which seem to have been prepared in 1692. These reports were made up at the request of some office of the central government at Paris, probably that of *contrôleur général des finances*. They were written by the *commis*, or inspectors, of manufactures, assigned to the various districts.

The *commis* were apparently requested to answer specific questions about the manufactures of their districts, for the material they sent in was collected under five distinct heads: (1) places where manufactures exist (*lieux où il y a des manufactures*); (2) types of goods made (*qualitez des manufactures*); (3) quantity of goods made (*quantité qui s'en fait*); (4) masters and looms (*maîtres et mestiers*); (5) places where goods are sold (*lieux de débit*). The *commis* were also asked, it seems, to report any place that was especially suitable for the establishment of a new industry or the enlargement of an old one, for notes are often added under the name of some town suggesting that it had water suited for dyeing or fulling, or that it would make an ideal spot for some type of manufacture. They were also requested to make known any special "abuses" that existed in the manufactures under their jurisdiction. But here the summary stops only to note, "An abuse exists in this place," and then refers the reader to the original *mémoire* of the *commis*.

That the reports of the *commis* varied widely in accuracy and completeness is clear. Some seem to have sought out their figures with great diligence

and care. Others were satisfied with rough estimates of the amount of production, the number of looms, and so on. Still others completely omitted a large part of the information requested. For the generalities of Berry and Bourbonnais, it was remarked that the *commis* had not sent in the *mémoires* asked of him, and the figures given were based on earlier reports.

In some respects the document is extremely disappointing. The omission of all mention of the manufactures of Paris, Tours, and Lyon leads one to believe that a separate report on silks was made up, or at least planned. The similar omission of Brittany and parts of French Flanders may likewise indicate that a separate report on linens was made, or contemplated.

In fact, the material presented approaches completeness only for fabrics made wholly or partly of wool, although a good many facts are included about hats, leather, stockings, silks, linens, hemp fabrics, paper, lace, and gloves. Even with the woolens there are considerable difficulties. Though sometimes each type of cloth was listed separately, often two to a dozen kinds were lumped together. For example, it is set down that the town of Châteauregnault, in the generality of Tours, made *rats*, *serges*, *estamines*, and *droguets*. Of these there were produced 1,000 pieces. There were 19 masters, 49 looms, and 4 fulling mills. But there is no indication as to how the production, the masters, or the looms were divided among the different fabrics.

Still another difficulty arises in connection with the names of the various fabrics. Many of the terms are no longer in use in French. Some that are still current now denote textiles different from those to which they were applied in the seventeenth century. Some of the names have no English equivalents. Others have English translations which are now obsolete. In some cases it is not even possible to find out exactly what sort of fabric was indicated by a given name. The most suitable method seems to be to use the French contemporary terms.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following is a partial list of the French cloth names. A brief indication of the type of fabric, and some of the English equivalents, are given. Many of the identifications are tentative.

Baracans: linen and wool; bayettes: baizes (English); belinges: small *droguets*; bergames: warp of linen or hemp, woof of wool; boges: coarse woolens; brocatelles: linen and wool; bulteaux: very coarse, narrow woolens; burats: cheap, light cloth of wool or linen and wool, like *cadis*; bures: very coarse brown woolens; cadis: light, low-priced sergelike cloth, caddis (English); camelots: made of camel or goat hair and silk or wool, camlet (English); canevas: canvas (English); coutils: linen, ticking (English); crêpes: crepes (English); crespens: coarse crêpes of silk or fine wool, crepons (English); droguets: wool or wool with silk or linen, drugget (English); espagnolettes: white *droguets*; estamets: light woolen, like *burats*; estamines: thin fabric of wool or silk, tamins (English); flannelles: flannels (English); flanets: kind of serge; frandines (ferrandines): silk and wool or hair, farandines (English); frises: woolen with wooly surface, frises (English); frisons: cloth with raised work of silk or other thread (?); frocs: coarse woolen; fûtaines: linen and cotton or linen and wool, fustians (English); gallons: thick ribbon; ligatures: linen and wool; lingettes: kind of serge; mocquettes: linen and wool; papelines: silk and wool, poplins (English); peluches: goat hair and linen, plush (English); pinchinats: a kind of *droguets*;

Yet another obstacle in using the information given by this survey is that the production, when stated, is almost always given in pieces of cloth. Though the width of the pieces is frequently mentioned, the length seldom is. It is therefore usually impossible to determine the size of the pieces.

Despite all these shortcomings, the material in this document is extensive,<sup>2</sup> much of it is detailed, and some of it seems to have been compiled with painstaking care and accuracy. Of course there was probably a tendency for a *commis* not to underestimate the importance of the manufactures in his district, especially if he had held office for a long time and could therefore in a measure he held responsible for the existing situation. On the other hand, a number of the *commis* did not hesitate to announce that production was falling off, because of the war with Spain or for some other reason.

Perhaps the best way to bring out the type of data contained in this survey is to summarize the material garnered from a few of the more important entries:

razes (rats?): smooth woolen or woolen with silk; ratines: woolen, with woolly surface; revêches: a kind of baize; sayettes: a sort of woolen serge mixed with silk, sagathy (English); serges: serges (English), *rases*, napless (English), *drapées*, milled (English); sergettes: light, thin serges; tiretaines: linen and wool, linsey-woolsey (English); toiles: linen, hemp or a mixture of the two.

<sup>2</sup> The extent of the data is best shown by listing the districts included in the survey:

Generality of Toulouse . . . . .	Bosson, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Montpellier . . . . .	de la Marque, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Montauban . . . . .	Le Poupet, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Clermont . . . . .	Herier de Fontclair, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Limoges . . . . .	Herier de Fontclair, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Provence . . . . .	Reports based on <i>mémoires</i> from David, inspector of Dauphiné
Generality of Burgundy . . . . .	Barollet, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Dauphiné . . . . .	David, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Tours . . . . .	Ruffin, inspector of manufactures
Province of Maine . . . . .	} Included under the generality of Tours
Province of Anjou . . . . .	
Generality of Orléans . . . . .	Cottard, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Champagne . . . . .	Blampignon and Mandonnat, inspectors of manufactures
Soissonnais . . . . .	Also under Blampignon
Châlonnais . . . . .	Also under Mandonnat
Generality of Amiens . . . . .	Ticquet, inspector of manufactures
Department of Beauvais . . . . .	Chrestien, inspector of manufactures

(This was partly in the generality of Paris, partly in that of Amiens.)

Generality of Rouen . . . . .	Cauvier, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Caen . . . . .	Bocquet, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Alençon . . . . .	Balmier, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Poitou . . . . .	Bonneval, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Berry . . . . .	} sieur de Pré de Siègle, inspector of manufactures
Generality of Bourbonnais . . . . .	
Generality of Bourdeaux . . . . .	} Fourrestier, inspector of manufactures
Parlement of Pau . . . . .	



Dijon was not notable as an industrial center. There, 11 manufacturers produced only 200 pieces of *serges drapées*,  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an ell wide, of good quality. The town boasted 2 fulling mills and 7 master dyers. These last were probably occupied in large part with cloth brought from outside the town to be inspected and marked there, for to the bureau of inspection came 9,000 pieces of cloth from outside the generality, and from 5,000 to 6,000 pieces from other places in Burgundy. What cloth was not used locally was sent to other Burgundian towns, to Franche-Comté, and to Lorraine. The poor and orphans in the Hospital of Dijon made 3,500 pairs of woolen stockings. Some coarse English style lace was also produced.

Orléans was more important as a manufacturing town. It produced 2,000 pieces of *serges*, *frocs*, and *baguettes*, and 13,000 pieces of textiles from other places were marked at its bureau. It had 50 master serge-makers, 5 fulling mills, and 16 dyers. The number of looms is given as 10, but considering the number of masters and the extent of production, this must be a mistake. Perhaps 10 was a slip of the pen for 100. In Orléans were also made 50,000 dozen pairs of stockings a year, through the enterprise of 54 *maitres-bonnetiers*. Some were knitted, others were made on the frame. The wool for them came from Berry and from Spain, about 80,000 pounds of it being used. While the cloth was sold in the town and its environs, the stockings were sent to such distant markets as Paris, Lyon, and Bordeaux. A quantity of leather was prepared by 7 tanners and 21 master leather-dressers. Hats were manufactured by 21 master hat-makers. In addition, the town had 3 sugar refineries, a glassworks and a paper mill.

Romorantin made white cloth, other cloth, and several kinds of *serges* from wool of the locality, of Berry, and of Spain, to the extent of 5,784 pieces. It had 130 master manufacturers, 135 looms, 13 fulling mills, and 35 master fullers. It sold its cloth to Paris, Orléans, Picardy, and Champagne, and also at a local fair held once a year.

Reims had a flourishing textile industry. It produced annually 50,419 pieces of cloth, *façon de Berry*, *serges* of various types, *estamines*, *razes*, *droguets*, and *dauphinnées*. To achieve this production, it had 1,403 master cloth, serge, and *estamine* makers, 1,277 looms, 12 fulling mills, and 8 dyers. It sold its fabrics to Paris, Lyon, Rouen, Troyes, and other French cities, to Flanders and to Italy. Before the war, it had sent many of them to Liège. In addition, 22 weavers, with 21 looms, made from 800 to 900 pieces of *crêpes*  $\frac{1}{2}$  ell wide, from Lyon silk, for Paris and Flanders. Ribbons of various sorts were also made, as well as 600 pairs of wool and silk stockings. Four weavers turned out 1,800 pieces of *bulleaux*,  $\frac{1}{4}$  ell wide, for Brie and Picardy. Sixteen weavers made cheap woolen blankets and coverings, for local use. Forty-eight weavers, employed by local townsmen, were making linens  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ell wide, and hemp fabrics of all widths. Twenty-five master hat-makers produced 15,000 hats. Three tanners made strong, high-grade leather. Twelve tawers prepared 40,000 sheepskins a year for gloves, pouches, wallets, and the like. Five thousand pounds of wool were used each year by the poor in the *Hôpital* in making stockings.

Sedan was likewise a real textile center. Cloth, including the finer sorts copied after those of Spain, Holland, and England, was made to the extent of 3,534 pieces a year by 29 master drapers, with 111 looms. In addition, 4 merchants from Paris were making fine cloths, under the special advantages granted by a royal privilege. Each was required to keep 40 looms going, and to full and dye the cloth made. M. Cadeau had 48 looms in operation, M. Mignon 45, M. de la Motte 41, and M. Rousseau 62. These privileged manufactures together employed 731 people, including their dyers. M. Cadeau at one time had had as many as 116 looms in operation. The cloth made in Sedan was sold to Paris, Lyon, Rouen, Troyes, and other French cities. Lyon was buying less than formerly and was, instead, purchasing Dutch and English cloth, brought in via Geneva. Sedan was also producing 9,194 pieces of 4 kinds of *serges* each year. There were 14 master serge-makers, with a total of 93 looms. The *serges* were sold locally, to the army, to Troyes, Reims, and other cities. There were in the town 5 dyers and 14 fulling mills. Seven master hat-makers produced 9,600 hats a year. Fifteen tanners were busy making leather. A man named Quentin Courbé employed 150 persons

in the manufacture of linen thread. He bought his flax locally, had his thread bleached in Holland, produced 1,500 pounds of thread a year, and sold it in Sedan, Mezières, and Charleville. There was also a large lace-making industry flourishing in the city and vicinity, which was reputed to "give subsistence" to 18,000 people. The lace was sold in Holland, Poland, Germany, and France.

Amiens went in heavily for serge-making, since there the annual production was 11,100 pieces. These serges were of 5 different kinds. They were sent to Paris and all over France, and some were also exported by the merchants of Amiens, Lyon and Paris. Amiens also specialized in a kind of small *camelots* called *guignettes*, of which 40,000 pieces were made. Nor was this all, for of *camelots, façon de Lille*, there were made 2,500 pieces; of *estamines*, 25,000 pieces; of *razes*, 10,000 pieces; of *serges, façon de Nîmes*, 1,700 pieces; and of *razes, façon d'Écosse*, 200 pieces. All these textiles were made by 480 masters, with 1,500 looms. Ten masters, with 15 looms, also made *revêches*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an ell wide. All the fabrics mentioned above were made by masters of the *corps de la sayetterie*. Another guild, that of the *hautelisseurs*, were allowed to make only such textiles as were wholly or partly of silk. The 110 masters of this guild controlled 500 looms and turned out each year 35,760 pieces of *castagnettes*, *frandines*, and a special kind of serges. Outside these two guilds were 20 masters, with 50 looms, who made linens. In addition, there were 2 other manufactures. One, owned by the sieurs Cattu and Malo, made 300 pieces of *camelots* on 16 looms, and 120 pieces of *peluches* on 10 looms. The other, which had secured a privilege, made 300 pieces of *camelots* on 16 looms, and 60 pieces of *peluches* on 5 looms. Both had the reputation of making very fine fabrics. Taken as a whole, Amiens produced in an average year 129,840 pieces of stuffs. It had, besides, 3 soap works, which turned out a large quantity of soap, much of which was needed in the manufacture of textiles.

Abbéville was noted for the possession of 3 manufactures, which operated under privileges secured from the king. The first was the famous one founded by the sieur Van Robais. It made fine cloth copied after that of Holland, England, and Spain. Its output amounted to 500 pieces a year. It had 61 looms and a fulling mill. The second belonged to the sieurs Monvoisin and Homazel. It made *moquettes* on 32 looms. It had also 8 looms on which apprentices, until they were sufficiently skillful to make the *moquettes*, made the borders for *peluches*. The third manufacture belonged to sieur Fuzelise (?). In it were made Flemish style *coutils* on 20 looms, and also tough, colored linens, suitable for making mattress covers. So high was the reputation of these *coutils* and linens that they were always sold before they were manufactured. Beside these manufactures, Abbéville had 45 masters, with 140 looms, who made *coutils* and fabrics of linen and hemp, to the extent of 1,600 pieces a year. Still another industry was the manufacture of fine yarn from Spanish wool. In addition, there were 24 masters, with 70 looms, who turned out each year 900 pieces of *baracans*, 300 pieces of 2 kinds of serges, 200 pieces of *droguets*, 300 pieces of *tiretaines* and *belinges*, 200 pieces of *pinchinats*, and 60 pieces of *razes*.

Beauvais had two large guilds of textile workers. One, known as the *grand corps*, made the finer cloths; the other, the *petit corps*, made the more common fabrics, such as ordinary serges. The *grand corps* had 70 masters, with an output of 13,000 pieces. The *petit corps*, with 112 masters, made 15,000 pieces. The two *corps* together had 493 looms. The *grand corps* used annually 115,000 pounds of Spanish wool, 2,000 pounds of English wool, and 160,000 pounds of French wool. The *petit corps* used 185,000 pounds of ordinary local wool. The types of fabrics made included 4 kinds of *ratines*, 4 kinds of serges, *estamets*, *burats*, *espagnolettes*, *sommières* (?), *revêches*, and English style flannels. There were 10 dyers. There was also a manufacture of tapestries, with a royal privilege, owned by sieur Behagle. Lace of linen and of silk was made in the surrounding area. The textiles of Beauvais were sold all over France, and especially at the fairs of Saint-Germain and Saint-Denis at Paris. There was also at Beauvais an enormous bleaching business. Each year between 28,000 and 30,000 pieces of linen were bleached for merchants of the town, of Saint-Quentin and of

Paris. The compiler of this survey noted that there was made in and around Beauvais a large quantity of fine linens called *demies Hollandes*, which the *commis* had failed to mention.

Darnetal had 93 masters and 194 looms. The looms were divided among various kinds of textiles thus: English and Dutch style cloth, 6; Elbeuf style cloth, 26; a cloth called *draps de sceau*, 45; *pinchinats*, 76; blankets and coverings of all sorts, 41. The compiler remarked that these cloths were a little inferior to those of Rouen, but added, "It is an advantage for the good of commerce that they should not be equal."

Rouen had 65 masters and 202 looms, engaged in making cloth Elbeuf style and English style, as well as *espagnolettes*, colored *droguets*, and white *ratines*. It had 53 masters, 52 looms, making silk and wool fabrics called *papelines* and *frandines*. It had 194 looms producing enough *brocatelles* and *ligatures* to supply almost all the French demand, although formerly a great quantity of these textiles had been imported from Spanish Flanders. All the above-mentioned fabrics were sold to the various cities of France. For local consumption, 37 masters, with 71 looms, turned out coarse *baracans*  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an ell wide, while 65 looms made *berluches* (?), and medium grade *droguets*. To dye its cloth and that of Darnetal, Rouen had 41 dyers. In addition, 42 master tapestry-makers produced for sale in France and abroad, especially in the northern European countries, a kind of tapestry made with a warp of linen and a woof of goat or cow hair (low grade), or wool (medium grade), or silk and wool (high grade). A flourishing hat industry, which sold its products to Paris, numbered 80 master hat-makers, and turned out annually 3,280 dozen woolen hats and 638 dozen made of fur. In the neighborhood of Rouen were 32 paper mills, which specialized in gray wrapping paper and in print paper. Each mill had an output of about 6 or 8 reams a day and employed 6 persons.

Elbeuf was famous for its cloth industry. It had 42 masters, and 298 looms. Of these some made fine cloth, English or Dutch style, and a few made white cloth, but the vast majority were producing a fine cloth that had come to be known as *drap d'Elbeuf*. Formerly Elbeuf had specialized in a strong white cloth, which when dyed was suitable for cassocks and mantles. It was only after the new woolen regulations of 1669 that two men, named Lemounis and Lecoite, had introduced the making of fine cloth. The founders had been forced to retire to Holland because of their religion, but the industry was carried on by masters who had been trained under them.

Caen had a manufacture of fine cloth, English and Dutch style, and of *ratines* owned by sieur Massieu. Though he had 12 looms, a dyer, and a fulling mill, his output was only 70 pieces a year. But his cloth was of the highest quality and made only of Spanish wool. In the town there were also 708 masters, who produced annually from 9,000 to 10,000 pieces of serges, *frocs*, and *revêches*, and gave employment to 8 dyers. There were also 100 frames, which produced annually 20,000 pairs of good quality woolen stockings. A large number of hides, imported from the West Indies, Ireland and Brazil, were tanned in Caen.

Poitiers, with 67 masters, 6 fulling mills, and 10 dyers, had an annual output of 600 pieces of *camelots*, *estamines*, *crêpes*, and serges, which were sold to La Rochelle, Mantes, Lyon, and Limoges. It produced also 20 dozen pairs a day of cheap woolen stockings. Hats were manufactured by 22 master hat-makers. Some linens were made for local consumption. Chamois-style leather of very fine quality was made by 10 masters, from the hides of sheep, goats, and chamois.

The entries analyzed above are more complete than most of those included in the survey, but they give a fair idea of the type of information. In all, there are over 400 entries. Most of them describe a single town. In many, however, 2 or 3, or even 20 or 30 small towns and villages are lumped together. A study of the survey as a whole brings out some interesting statistics, but a number of reservations must be made about them. In the first

place, so many of the entries are incomplete that the figures must be regarded as partial, even for the areas covered. In the second place, a large number of the figures given are obviously of the nature of estimates, rather than of exact reports. In the third place, it was necessary to treat some of the figures arbitrarily. Thus when the production of a town was given as from 500 to 600 pieces of cloth, the figure 550 was used to ease the work of calculation. In the fourth place, so many kinds of textiles were listed together, in many entries, that it was often impossible to disentangle them, save into the broadest categories. But with all these reservations, the statistics that can be worked out from the various entries are to some degree illuminating.

Some idea of the extent of the survey and of the widespread nature of the textile industry in France at the close of the seventeenth century may be obtained by listing the fabrics made, and after each fabric the number of times it is mentioned in the survey as being made in some place:

Serges of various types, 166	<i>Camelots</i> , 8
Cloth ( <i>draps</i> ) of various types, 92	<i>Sergettes</i> , 8
<i>Toiles</i> , 72	<i>Rats</i> , 7
<i>Estamines</i> , 58	<i>Revêches</i> , 7
<i>Droguets</i> , 56	<i>Baracans</i> , 4
<i>Cadis</i> , 45	<i>Peluches</i> , 3
<i>Razes</i> , 30	<i>Bures</i> , 3
<i>Cordelats</i> , 18	<i>Bayettes</i> , 3
<i>Tiretaines</i> , 18	<i>Boges</i> , 3
<i>Crespons</i> , 15	<i>Frisons</i> , 3
<i>Burats</i> , 15	<i>Pinchinats</i> , 2
<i>Ratines</i> , 11	<i>Baguettes</i> , 2
<i>Estamets</i> , 9	<i>Sargues</i> , 2
<i>Couvertures</i> , 9	<i>Belinges</i> , 2
<i>Procs</i> , 9	

The following were mentioned as being made in only one town or village:

<i>Coutils</i>	<i>Sommières</i>
<i>Dauphinées</i>	<i>Flanelles</i>
<i>Frizes</i>	<i>Crêpes</i>
<i>Burails</i>	<i>Moquettes</i>
<i>Taffetas</i>	<i>Brocatelles</i>
<i>Finettes de raz</i>	<i>Ligatures</i>
<i>Castagnettes</i>	<i>Bulteaux</i>
<i>Frandines</i>	<i>Bergames</i>
<i>Satins</i>	<i>Estameaux</i>
<i>Envirsins</i>	<i>Fâtaines</i>

In trying to sift out the statistics on different textiles, there were only a few for which it was possible to get a large number of cases in which they were listed separately. Outstanding in this connection were cloths (*draps*) and serges, though both these terms covered a fairly wide variety of fabrics. A summary for these two textiles is most easily given in tabular form.

TABLE 1. CLOTH (*Draps*)

<i>Type of Data</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Masters</i>
No figures given . . . . .	1			
Output only . . . . .	25	31,450		
Looms only . . . . .	2		30	
Masters only . . . . .	1			26
Output and looms . . . . .	1	11,978	304	
Masters and looms . . . . .	10		644	65
Output and masters . . . . .	21	21,990		297
Output, masters, and looms . . . . .	8	8,337	529	72
Totals . . . . .	69	73,755	1,507	460

TABLE 2. SERGES (*Twenty-three Types Mentioned*)

<i>Type of Data</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Masters</i>
No figures given . . . . .	2			
Output only . . . . .	10	8,400		
Looms only . . . . .	1		60	
Masters only . . . . .	9			50
Output and looms . . . . .	5	26,900	699	
Masters and looms . . . . .	8		157	114
Output and masters . . . . .	10	18,414		201
Output, masters, and looms . . . . .	32	51,353	1,471	848
Totals . . . . .	77	105,067	2,387	1,213

From these tables it is possible to work out some averages. Their significance is, however, questionable, since they cover a wide variation from section to section and from city to city, as well as a considerable divergence in the accuracy of the basic statistics. However, they are not without interest.

	<i>Cloths</i>	<i>Serges</i>
Average output per loom, in pieces . . . . .	24.4	36.1
Average output per master, in pieces . . . . .	82.2	66.5
Average number of looms per master . . . . .	8.6	1.7

These figures are obviously not even self-consistent. For instance, the average output per loom, multiplied by the average number of looms per master, does not give the indicated output per master. This is because the averages are based on different sets of figures. The only set which appears in all of them is that where output, looms, and masters were given for the same establishments.

On the other hand, certain things are clear. Though the output per loom for serges was greater than for cloth, the output per master was greater for cloth than for serges. The reason is, of course, that the masters in the cloth industry had a greater number of looms. In other words, the making of cloth was organized on a more capitalistic basis. This basis was probably more often the domestic than the factory system, though it is well known that certain cloth-makers, like Van Robais, of Abbéville, had establishments

that can only be described as factories. The greater output per loom for serges is to be explained by the fact that in general the pieces of serge were smaller, lighter, and not so finely made as the cloth.

That the tendency toward a capitalistic type of organization would be more apparent in the cloth industry than with the serges was to be expected. Cloth had long been regarded as the most important industrial product of France. It had therefore been the special object of royal encouragement and aid. It was for cloth-making that many royal privileges had been granted in the time of Colbert and thereafter, and these privileged, royal manufactures were almost always organized on a fairly large scale and on a capitalistic basis. On the other hand, there did exist privileged serge manufactures. There was one, for instance, at Gournay, which boasted 56 looms and made London-style serges. The figures given in the survey for the privileged cloth manufactures show how thoroughly capitalistic they tended to be.

TABLE 3. PRIVILEGED CLOTH MANUFACTURES

<i>Place</i>	<i>Proprietor</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Workers</i>
Saptes . . . . .	Varennes	46	1,450	500 to 600
Saint-Aubin-la-Rivière . . .	Ango and Camus	30		
Abbéville . . . . .	Van Robais	61	500	
Clermont . . . . .		52	800	
Gisors . . . . .	Buffin	4		
Caen . . . . .	Massieu	12	70	
Châlons . . . . .	d'Arras	32		
Sedan . . . . .	Cadeau	48	}	731
Sedan . . . . .	Mignon	45		
Sedan . . . . .	de la Motte	41		
Sedan . . . . .	Rousseau	62		

With the fabrics other than cloths or serges for which separate figures could be secured, it is perhaps sufficient to present those cases in which the number of looms, the number of masters, and the output were all given, following this by a general table of the totals.

TABLE 4. FABRICS OTHER THAN CLOTHS AND SERGES

<i>Textile</i>	<i>Number of Places with Establishments</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Masters</i>
<i>Frocs</i> . . . . .	1	6,000	87	56
<i>Cordelats</i> . . . . .	1	20,000	100	100
<i>Fûtaines</i> . . . . .	1	900	24	24
<i>Estamines</i> . . . . .	3	3,709	142	103
<i>Tiretaines*</i> . . . . .	3	3,300	16	51
<i>Droguets</i> . . . . .	2	2,320	76	62
<i>Cadis</i> . . . . .	15	8,583	534	339
<i>Peluches</i> . . . . .	2	180	15	2
<i>Camelots</i> . . . . .	2	600	32	3
<i>Revêches*</i> . . . . .	1	350	2	13
Totals . . . . .	31	45,942	1,028	753

\* The explanation for the excess of masters over looms is not clear.

TABLE 5. VARIOUS FABRICS\* WHICH WERE LISTED SEPARATELY

Type of Data	Number of Places	Output in Pieces	Looms	Masters
No figures given . . . . .	20			
Output only . . . . .	39	54,697		
Looms only . . . . .	0			
Masters only . . . . .	4			31
Output and looms . . . . .	5	13,260	327	
Masters and looms . . . . .	7		217	111
Masters and output . . . . .	12	21,405		131
Output, looms, and masters . . . . .	31	45,942	1,028	753
Totals . . . . .	118	135,304	1,572	1,026

\* Beside the ten fabrics listed in Table 4, those included in Table 5 are *couvertures crespous*, *moquettes*, *bulteaux*, *bergames*, *estameaux*, *baracans*, *sargues*, *ratines*, *burats razes*, and *sergettes*.

In many of the entries in this survey, it was impossible to disentangle the various fabrics at all. The figures as to output, masters, and looms were often given for 2 or 3, or even as many as 6 or 8 kinds of textiles taken together. The table that results from summarizing this type of entry is therefore very composite in character. It covers more than 100 places. The fabrics appearing in it, together with the number of times each was mentioned as being produced in some place, are *serges*, 90; *estamines*, 45; *droguets*, 34; *cadis*, 28; *razes*, 27; *draps*, 23; *crespous*, 14; *burats*, 13; *tiretaines*, 11; *cordelats*, 9; *estamets*, 9; *ratines*, 6; *toiles*, 6; *rats*, 5; *camelots*, 4; 3 times each, *bures*, *bayettes*, *boges*, *baracans*, *frisons*, *frocs*, *sergettes* twice each, *pinchinats*, *baguettes*, *couvertures*, *belinges*, *revêches*; once each *coutils*, *dauphinées*, *frizes*, *burails*, *peluches*, *finettes de raz*, *frandines*, *en virsins*, *sommières*, *flanelles*, *crêpes*, *brocatelles*, *ligatures*, a hemp fabric and a linen-and-wool fabric for which no name was given.

TABLE 6. MISCELLANEOUS FABRICS TAKEN TOGETHER

Type of Data	Number of Places	Output in Pieces	Looms	Masters
No figures given . . . . .	4			
Output only . . . . .	10	5,650		
Looms only . . . . .	2		159	
Masters only . . . . .	7			235
Output and looms . . . . .	5	32,550	882	
Masters and looms . . . . .	21		1,076	569
Masters and output . . . . .	10	19,038		1,073
Masters, looms, and output . . . . .	70	278,375	6,576	4,128
Totals . . . . .	129	335,613	8,693	6,005

For *toiles*, that is fabrics of linen, hemp, or a mixture of the two, and for silks, the figures are much less complete than for the other textiles, especially in view of the omission of Paris, Lyon, Tours, and Brittany. The material on silks is, in fact, so scanty that it is not worth tabulating, but for the *toiles* a good deal of data is given, as is shown in the following table.

TABLE 7. TOILES

<i>Type of Data</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Masters</i>
No figures given . . . . .	13			
Output only . . . . .	5	62,300		
Looms only . . . . .	1		214	
Masters only . . . . .	24			847
Output and looms . . . . .	0			
Masters and looms . . . . .	20		843	516
Masters and output . . . . .	1	850		28
Output, looms, and masters . . . . .	2	1,900	174	69
Totals . . . . .	66	65,050	1,231	1,460

By combining Tables 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7, a composite picture of the data on textiles contained in the survey may be obtained.

TABLE 8. COMPOSITE TABLE, CLOTHS, SERGES, FABRICS LISTED SEPARATELY, FABRICS LISTED TOGETHER, AND TOILES

<i>Type of Data</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>Output in Pieces</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>Masters</i>
No figures given . . . . .	40			
Output only . . . . .	89	162,497		
Looms only . . . . .	6		463	
Masters only . . . . .	45			1,189
Output and looms . . . . .	16	84,688	2,212	
Masters and looms . . . . .	66		2,937	1,375
Masters and output . . . . .	54	81,697		1,730
Output, looms, and masters . . . . .	143	385,907	9,778	5,870
Totals . . . . .	459*	714,789	15,390	10,164

\* There is some duplication in this column, but not in the others.

Of course the figure 714,789 pieces does not give the total production indicated in the survey. To it must be added the output of the 2,564 masters and the 3,400 looms for which no production figures were given; the output of the 40 places for which no figures were given; the production of 14 towns and cities in the generality of Clermont, where the existence of 101 cloth merchants was noted, but nothing was said about manufactures; and the production of Berry, for which no data sufficient for tabular use was presented, but for which an annual output of something like 40,000 pieces of goods was indicated. Then, in order to estimate the total production of France in 1692-93, it would also be necessary to add a considerable figure for the areas omitted in the survey. It is impossible to make such an estimate, with even the roughest semblance of accuracy, but it seems not unlikely that a figure in the neighborhood of 1,000,000 pieces of goods per year would be a fair guess at the production of the whole country. In more modern terms, this would represent something like 30,000,000 or 40,000,000 square yards, since the piece of goods in seventeenth-century France ranged from 12 to 60 ells in length, and averaged perhaps between 20 and 30; while it



ranged from  $\frac{1}{2}$  ell to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  ells in width, and averaged about one ell. The French ell, or *aune*, was just under 4 English feet.

Such estimates as to the production of all France are, of necessity, mere approximations, but the statistics contained in this survey may be used in a somewhat more accurate fashion to indicate the tendency toward a capitalistic type of industrial organization in certain towns. Such a trend has been noted already in the cloth industry and in the privileged manufacturing establishments. It can likewise be demonstrated by listing a few towns where the old guild situation of one master to one loom existed, and then comparing them to towns where it is readily apparent that one master was controlling a number of looms. In the wording of the entries, the men who controlled the weaving were spoken of under a variety of names. They were often called master drapers, master manufacturers, or manufacturing drapers, but sometimes they were termed merely masters, or manufacturers, or merchants. The merchant drapers were often listed separately, though sometimes it is obvious that they were having weaving done for them under some version of the domestic system, for occasionally the entry reads, "14 marchands font travailler." The following lists show the varying conditions in different towns. It will be noted that it is difficult to make generalizations about the trend toward a capitalistic type of organization, either geographically or according to the size of the towns.

1			2		
Low Ratio of Looms to Masters			High Ratio of Looms to Masters		
Place	Masters	Looms	Place	Masters	Looms
Beaumont la Ronce . . . . .	25	27	Abbéville . . . . .	69	210
Brienne . . . . .	1	1	Amboise . . . . .	23	47
Châlons . . . . .	326	335	Amiens . . . . .	600	2,015
Château-portien . . . . .	35	35	Beauvais . . . . .	182	493
Châtillon-sur-Loing . . . . .	9	9	Brou . . . . .	20	50
Espalion . . . . .	13	15	Châteaugontier . . . . .	23	49
Joinville . . . . .	9	11	Châteauregnault . . . . .	19	44
La Charité . . . . .	18	18	Gourdon . . . . .	4	8
Loudun . . . . .	23	26	Grenade . . . . .	5	10
Mauvezin . . . . .	30	31	Herisson . . . . .	7	16
Montreuil-Bellay . . . . .	13	15	La Val . . . . .	32	69
Moulins-en-Gilbert . . . . .	7	7	Lectoure . . . . .	13	26
Nevers . . . . .	12	12	Muray, Loistault, and Nefuy . . . . .	23	75
Pierrefitte . . . . .	12	12	Neuillé-Pont-Pierre . . . . .	14	38
Romorantin . . . . .	130	135	Pouzanges . . . . .	11	23
Rozières . . . . .	17	18	Reugnay . . . . .	6	15
Saint-Girons . . . . .	38	38	Rouen . . . . .	155	325
Sommières . . . . .	52	52	Saint-Gaudens . . . . .	100	200
Sully . . . . .	19	22	Saint-Pourçain . . . . .	7	14
Ville-en-Tartenois . . . . .	13	15	Saumur . . . . .	15	32
Totals . . . . .	802	834	Tarascon . . . . .	10	21
			Vigan . . . . .	23	80
			Totals . . . . .	1,361	3,860

The ratio of looms to masters for list 1 is 1.04. Although the privileged manufactures have been omitted from list 2, still the ratio is 2.84. In Amiens, where the tendency toward a capitalist type of organization was very clear, the ratio was 3.36. In Beauvais it was 2.71. These two towns form a significant contrast to Châlons, where, though there were more than 300 looms, the average number of looms per master was only 1.03. When it is realized that there must have been many masters in Amiens each controlling but one loom or two, it becomes clear that some masters must have controlled a dozen or more looms, a situation possible only under a more or less capitalistic kind of business organization.

Although the bulk of the information contained in this survey has to do with textile manufactures, it also contains a good many figures pertaining to the leather and hat industries. Both of these appear in so large a number of entries that it is possible to compile some figures of more than local interest, but again some of the entries are incomplete, and the results are irregular in form.

In the leather industry, the output is listed under several heads: *chamois* (chamois skins, or other skins made up like chamois), *aludes* (colored sheep skins), *peaux de veaux* (calfskins), *peaux de vaches* (cowhides), *cuirs* and *cuirs forts* (leather), *bazannes* (sheepskins tanned in oak or larch bark, for bookbinding, and so forth), *parchemins* (parchments), and a mixed category which includes *peaux* (skins) not further identified. The leather workers likewise fell into several categories: *tanneurs* (tanners), *corroyeurs* (leather-dressers), *megisseurs* (tawers, i.e., makers of white leather, such leather being usually made from the skins of sheep or goats by treating them with alum or other minerals), *chamorieurs* (makers of chamois leather), *parcheminiers* (parchment-makers).

TABLE 9. THE MANUFACTURE OF LEATHER

## I. NUMBER OF MASTERS AND AMOUNT OF OUTPUT BOTH GIVEN

Place	Number of Masters	<i>Aludes</i>	<i>Peaux de Veaux</i>	<i>Cuirs and Cuirs Forts</i>	<i>Peaux</i>	<i>Bazannes</i>	<i>Peaux de Vaches</i>
Ganges . . . . .	19			1,100	300		
Anduze . . . . .	14	240	480	30		2,400	500
Alais . . . . .	18		1,200	2,500		43,200	10,000
Saint-Jean-de-la- Gardonnenque . .	7			300			300
La Salle . . . . .							160
Nîmes . . . . .	21			200	18,000		600
Beaucaire . . . . .	10			250			
Saint-André-de- Valborgne . . . .	1	360					
Totals . . . . .	92	600	1,680	4,380	18,300	45,600	11,560

## 2. OUTPUT MENTIONED, NUMBER OF MASTERS NOT GIVEN

<i>Kind of Leather</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>Output, in Hides</i>
<i>Cuir</i> s and <i>cuirs forts</i> . . . . .	9	8,110
<i>Bazannes</i> . . . . .	5	34,500
<i>Peaux de vaches</i> . . . . .	5	2,180
<i>Peaux de veaux</i> . . . . .	3	4,980
<i>Parchemins</i> . . . . .	4	60,840
<i>Chamois</i> . . . . .	1	300
<i>Peaux</i> , and so forth . . . . .	8	25,050

The total number of masters in the leather industry mentioned in the report was divided among the several categories thus:

<i>Tanneurs</i> . . . . .	530
<i>Corroyeurs</i> . . . . .	73
<i>Megisseurs</i> . . . . .	90
<i>Chamorieurs</i> . . . . .	10

It is perfectly clear that these statistics are by no means complete. It is more than likely that tanners were not mentioned in some of the basic reports, even when fairly large establishments existed, and there were, of course, a number of areas not covered in the survey. It is interesting to note that 79 towns or cities had from one to 25 tanners, 7 towns or cities had from 4 to 21 *corroyeurs*, and 19 towns or cities had from 2 to 12 *megisseurs*. Such figures give the impression that the leather industry was very widespread. Although many establishments must have been producing merely for local needs, other places, like Alais, must have been selling their leather goods to large and distant markets.

The figures of the hat industry are of much the same order as those for leather, though it seems possible that they are more complete. Most of the hats seem to have been made of wool, but sometimes, as at Rouen, fur is mentioned as a material. Beaver hats are never spoken of specifically in the survey.

TABLE 10. THE HAT-MAKING INDUSTRY

Number of hat-makers whose output was not mentioned . . . . .	438 *
Number of places in which these hat-makers were located . . . . .	69

\* The number of hat-makers per place varied from 1 to 46. As they were almost all listed as master hat-makers, many of them probably employed assistants, or had their hats made under the domestic system.

## OUTPUT ONLY GIVEN

<i>Place</i>	<i>Number of Hats</i>
Clermont [l'Herault] . . . . .	35,520 [? figure not quite legible]
Sumène . . . . .	840
Saint-Hypolyte [du Fort] . . . . .	384
Sauve . . . . .	240

## OUTPUT AND NUMBER OF MASTERS GIVEN

<i>Place</i>	<i>Output in Hats</i>	<i>Number of Master Hat-Makers</i>
Rouen . . . . .	47,016	80
Vigan . . . . .	14,400	20
Nîmes . . . . .	10,800	10
Sedan . . . . .	9,600	7
Vitry [le-François] . . . . .	8,000	11
Noyon . . . . .	7,450	9
Saint-Dizier . . . . .	4,600	8
Mézières . . . . .	4,500	8
Rethel . . . . .	4,000	7
Soissons . . . . .	3,400	6
Laon . . . . .	3,200	6
Mairvais . . . . .	2,400	13
Uzès . . . . .	2,400	7
Alais . . . . .	2,400	9
Marmande . . . . .	1,200	8
Saint-Gignaix . . . . .	720	1
Anduze . . . . .	600	5
Valarange . . . . .	360	4
Beucaire . . . . .	360	3
La Salle . . . . .	192	2
Montpellier . . . . .	120	5
Saint-André-de-Valborgne . . . . .	120	1
Totals . . . . .	127,838	230

It will be noted that although the average production works out at 555.7 hats per master, it varies in the different towns from 24 in Montpellier to 1,371 in Sedan. The average production per master is significantly larger in the towns with the largest total output, a fact which probably indicates a more highly organized industry on a capitalist basis in those towns.

In endeavoring to estimate the output of the masters for whom no production figures were given, it might not be unfair to use the average figure for the 22 cases where they were given. This method would give for the 438 masters whose output was not mentioned a total production of 243,397 hats, and a total of 371,235 hats for the 668 masters in both categories, though it is quite possible that this estimate is too high or too low. To arrive at a rough estimate of the production of all France, one would have to add to this figure the production of the 4 places mentioned above, for which the output but not the masters was given; the production of 4 establishments which were noted in the survey, but for which no figures were given; the production of Marseille, which was estimated as worth 900,000 *livres* a year (of this, 400,000 *livres*' worth consisted of *bonnets* of fine Spanish wool, dyed red and vermilion and sold to the Levant; the rest was mostly hats made for export to Italy, Spain, Germany, and Savoy); and the production of the areas omitted from the survey. This last figure would probably be fairly large, as Paris was noted for its hats. All in all,

an estimate of 500,000 hats a year might not be too high for the total production of all France.

Some miscellaneous data from the survey deserve mention. Lace manufacture was spoken of as established in 7 localities, but no figures as to output were given. Paper manufacture was noted in 14 places, and a total of 127 paper mills were enumerated. Gloves were mentioned as being made in 5 towns and a total of 61 master glove-makers was indicated.

For the stocking industry a good many figures were given. Wool stockings made on frames were mentioned as being produced in several places. At Caen 20,000 pairs a year were made, on 100 frames. At Orléans 50,000 dozen pairs a year were produced, by 54 master *bonnetiers*. At Beaucaire 8 masters made wool stockings on frames. At Dourdan silk stockings were made, as well as wool ones, both by hand and on frames. There were 600 pairs of stockings of wool and of silk made at Reims each year. There were 3,000 pairs of silk stockings made annually at Nîmes, by 109 masters with 350 frames. The manufacture of hand-knitted woolen stockings was noted specifically in 16 places. In 7 of these, viz., Dijon, Langres, Vitry [-le-François], Noyon, Laon, Soissons, and Reims, this manufacture was carried on wholly or in part in the poorhouses (*bôpitaux*). Almost 300 master *bonnetiers* were enumerated in various places, and most of them seem to have been engaged in the manufacture of woolen stockings, as well as of other articles. A few sample statistics will illustrate this knitted wool-stocking industry. At Mirande 3,000 pounds of wool were used each year. At Saint-Girons 100 pairs of stockings were made each day. Cadillac, Agen, and Nérac each had 2 master *bonnetiers* and turned out 480 pairs a year.

From the survey under consideration, much information about the internal commerce of France could also be gleaned, but it would be difficult to digest or to tabulate, since much of it is in very general terms. Indeed the chief interest of the material on manufactures described above lies in the fact that much of it is so detailed and specific. Then, too, 1692-93 is an interesting period from which to have statistics. Colbert had been dead for nine years. Much that was artificial in the stimulus that he gave to manufactures must have passed away, while his contributions of permanent worth must have been still in their prime. Of course France was at war in the years 1692 and 1693, but the survey does not seem to indicate that the loss of markets or the interference with trade had as yet seriously affected her manufactures. What loss there was, was probably about balanced by the increased demand for uniforms and other war material. In fact, the years covered by the survey probably give a fairly representative picture of the industries of France toward the close of the seventeenth century.

The survey as a whole presents a picture of the widespread and important character of some of the industries of France at this period. The picture is sketchy in parts, hazy in parts, and blank in parts, but none the less it gives rise to a very definite impression that France had, by 1692, outstripped all her industrial competitors in Europe.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



## NOTES CONCERNING THE MATERIAL ON WHICH THIS WORK IS BASED

*Manuscript sources.*—The manuscript material on French mercantilism before the period of Colbert available at the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Archives Nationales in Paris is of a scattered and fragmentary but still voluminous nature. At the former, in the "Cinq Cents de Colbert" and in the Clairambault collection are a few official documents relating to manufactures and commerce. The great collection of "Manuscripts français" contains a great many more, as well as manuscript *mémoires* and reports dealing with economic policies and developments. In the Archives much material of the same sort is to be found here and there in the various series, especially AD XI, AD XIII, AD XIV, and K.

For the years of Colbert's power the manuscript materials are much fuller. The Baluze collection at the Bibliothèque has some documents which cast light on Colbert's career, while the Clairambault collection includes a great many dispatches from Colbert to the intendants for the years 1679 to 1683, as well as scattered papers on various topics covering his whole era. The "Cinq Cents de Colbert" has in it reports and *mémoires* on economic matters, as well as some dispatches by Colbert. In the "Manuscripts français" and its subdivisions (e.g., the de la Mare collection, the "Nouvelles acquisitions françaises," the Margry collection) are great quantities of official documents on industry, commerce, colonies, mines, poor relief, and so forth, including many letters by Colbert and his son Seignelay. The "Mélanges de Colbert" are especially valuable because they are composed in part of letters sent to Colbert by both officials and private persons. At the Archives, the Colbert material is somewhat more dispersed. But the series AD XI, AD XIII, AD XIV, F<sup>12</sup>, and K, KK, contain a wide variety of documents on economic matters, while G<sup>7</sup> has in it also a large number of letters from the intendants to Colbert. None of the manuscript material has been adequately catalogued so far as its use for economic history is concerned, and it is certain that there are valuable discoveries still to be made in these and other collections.

*Printed source material.*—The printed source material for the pre-Colbert period consists of two main varieties—first, contemporary works chiefly useful for the insight they give into mercantilist thought; and second, collections of documents, published usually under official auspices, in the nineteenth century. In the first category are the works by Bodin, Laffemas, Montchrétien, Sully, Richelieu, Eon, Fournier, and a number of others, including some anonymous authors. In the second fall the collections of documents pertaining to the Estates General, edited by Mayer and by Lalourcé



and Duval; the collection of laws by Isambert and others; of commercial treaties by Hauterive and Cussy; and of colonial documents by Margry. The collections of letters—that of Richelieu by d'Avenel, of Sourdis by Sue, and of Mazarin by Cheruel, are disappointing because of the small amount of material relating to economic matters. Forbonnais' history of French finances from 1595 to 1721, published in the eighteenth century, is really a secondary work, but it contains so many documents in full that it may also be considered as a collection of source material.

Many of the works mentioned above carry over into the Colbert period. But here the collection by Depping of administrative correspondence under Louis XIV becomes of primary importance. Standing out above all other works is Clément's great collection of Colbert's letters and *mémoires*, edited with care, and including in its footnotes hundreds of selections from letters to Colbert. Moreau de Saint-Méry's collection of official documents relating to the French West Indies is invaluable, while the eighteenth-century compilation, the *Recueil des réglemens généraux*, is the *sine qua non* for the industrial regulations. Jacques Savary's handbook for business men, *Le Parfait Négociant*, is a mine of information on all sorts of economic matters, and the *Dictionnaire universel de commerce* edited by his sons, Jacques and Philémon, though of a later date, may be used to check many points.

*Secondary works.*—The secondary works bearing squarely on French mercantilism are amazingly few. But there are a good many books on topics more or less relevant. Of the general treatments of mercantilism, that by Horrock's contains a little and that by Heckscher a great deal of material on France, while the treatments of special phases of French mercantilism by Harsin and Morini-Comby are also of use. The volumes edited by L. André on the economic history of the seventeenth century, in the bibliographic series "*Les Sources de l'histoire de France*," are a most valuable guide to the period. The *Histoire de France* edited by Lavissee is the best general work on the era. Its chapters on economic subjects are good, especially in Lavissee's own volume on Louis XIV. In fact the chapter by him on Colbert is the best brief treatment in any language. M. Marion's *Dictionnaire des institutions de France aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* is most helpful on technicalities of government, administration, and taxation. Sée's brief economic history of France is illuminating, as are his other books and articles on the period, many of which have full bibliographies. Among the useful histories of special topics are the long one on the navy by La Roncière and the shorter one by Tramond, the history of the French colonies by Hanoteaux and Martineau, of French Canada by Wrong, of French commerce by Levasseur, of French trade in the Levant by Masson, of French commercial companies by Bonnassieux, and of French colonization companies by Chailley-Bert. The history of the laboring classes by Levasseur is really a rather badly organized general economic history of France.

For the earlier period, Boissonnade's *Le Socialisme d'état, l'industrie, et*

*les classes industrielles en France . . . 1453-1661* is crammed with information on French industry, gleaned by a lifetime of arduous labor in the archives. Though the lack of footnotes, an index, and a usable bibliography reduces its value somewhat, and though its title is not justified by its contents, it is none the less absolutely indispensable. The works by d'Avenel and Caillet on Richelieu, and those by Cheruel and Lair on Fouquet are of some help, though none of them stresses economic matters. Palm's book on the economic policies of Richelieu has a good bibliography, but its translations, citations, and conclusions are not to be trusted. The book and the articles by Fagniez, and those by Hauser are authoritative treatments of economic and social topics, and are especially useful for the period of Henry IV. On Eon there is an excellent monograph by Dugast-Matifeux.

The works on Colbert are not many. Clément's, though long since out of date, is still the best treatment. The books of Joubleau and Neymarck add little to it of importance. Sargent's short treatise on Colbert's economic policies is of little worth, since its author cannot forgive Colbert for not having been a Gladstonian liberal. Boissonnade's book on French industry under Colbert is broader than its title would indicate. It is up to date and contains much new material discovered by the author, but suffers from the same faults as its predecessor mentioned above. Though it is hard to read and badly organized, it is a veritable treasure trove as regards the information in it. Boissonnade's other books and articles on the Company of the North (with Charliat), on labor in Poitou, on the textile factories in Languedoc, and so forth, are likewise invaluable.

On special topics there are also some important works. The eighteenth-century book of du Fre'ne de Francheville contains a tremendous number of facts about Colbert's tariffs, while the articles by Callery and by Elzinga are the only sound modern treatments of that subject. The works of Sottas and Weber on the East India Company, and of Chemin-Dupontes on the African companies are distinctly helpful, while that by Mims on Colbert's West India policies is the best monograph that has been written on this period. Though he does not sufficiently stress Colbert's fear of famine, Usher's history of the French grain trade is scholarly, detailed, and extremely helpful. G. Martin's work on industry under Louis XIV is sketchy and uneven in quality but good on special points. The monograph on the inspectors of manufactures by Bacquié, which contains information difficult to find elsewhere, is inexact and inaccurate in some places. Frémy's book on the mirror company and Godart's on the silk industry at Lyon deserve mention.

In a general way, it can be said that none of the books mentioned is definitive. There is so much work still to be done in the Parisian and local archives that it will be many years before such a book can be written on any phase of French economic history in the seventeenth century.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN THE ARCHIVES NATIONALES IN PARIS

### 1. AD XI, 1-57

Documents on commerce and industry before 1789, mostly printed edicts, decrees, regulations, and the like. Especially:

9. Documents on commerce and the Levant trade, 1617-1788.
34. Documents on lace, cloth of gold and cloth of silver, pewter, and so forth, 1617-1788.
35. Documents on iron and other metals, 1413-1789.
41. Documents on oil, soap, India trade, interest, and *lettres de change*, 1642-1789.
42. Documents on manufactures in general, 1604-1789.
43. Documents on manufactures in general, 1571-1740.
- 44<sup>A</sup>. Documents on manufactures, eighteenth century.
45. Documents on *manufactures royales*, *bâiments du roy*, and on other manufactures, 1349-1785.
48. Documents on sugar and tobacco, 1629-1712.
52. Documents on *toiles* and similar fabrics, 1627-1786.
53. Documents on the transit of goods, on glassworks, and on varied subjects, 1655-1755.

### 2. AD XIII

- 1<sup>A</sup>. Documents on water transportation, canals, and so forth, 1577-1786.
- 2<sup>A</sup>. Documents on quarries, roads, and highways, 1640-77.
- 2<sup>B</sup>. Documents on tolls, drainage of marshes, and on mines, 1546-1788.
10. Documents on bridges, roads, and rivers, 1575-1787.

### 3. AD XIV

1. Documents on alms, charity, hospitals, 1208-1789.
2. Documents on *hôpitaux civiles*, 1682-1733.
4. Documents on begging and *hôpitaux civiles*, 1613-1789.

### 4. E

1713. Decrees of the *conseil des dépêches*, 1661.

5. F<sup>12</sup>

- 641. Documents on commerce, eighteenth century.
- 645. *Mémoires* on commerce, especially that with the Levant, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 673. Documents on commerce and industry, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 674. Documents on commerce and industry in the eighteenth century.
- 1456<sup>A</sup>. Documents on the manufacture of tapestries at Beauvais, 1664-1721.
- 1491. Documents on the manufacture of glass, last part of the seventeenth century and first part of the eighteenth.
- 1641. Documents on the regulation of navigation, 1659-1710.
- 1834. Documents on commerce and the balance of trade, 1669-1788.
- 1910. Documents on tariffs, 1664-1705.

6. G<sup>7</sup> 1-1899

Papers, correspondence, and documents from the office of the *contrôleur-général*. The greater part of them date from 1703-15, but many are from the years before and after that period. The collection is full of very important source material. The cartons used for this book included:

- 1. Copies and minutes of the letters of the *contrôleur-général*, 1675-85.
- 71. Correspondence of the intendant (and others) of the generality of Alençon with the *contrôleur-général*, 1677-1789.
- 84. Correspondence of the intendant (and others) of Amiens with Colbert, 1678-83.
- 101. Correspondence of intendant of Auvergne to Colbert, 1678-83.
- 131. Correspondence of the intendant of Bordeaux to Colbert, 1678-80.
- 223. Correspondence of intendant of Champagne to Colbert, 1677-81.
- 295. Correspondence of the intendant of Languedoc to Colbert, 1669-81.
- 355. Correspondence of intendant (and others) of Lyon to Colbert, 1678-82.
- 425. Correspondence of officials in Paris with the *contrôleur-général*, 1681-84.

- 449. Correspondence of intendant of Poitiers to Colbert, 1678-83.
- 458. Correspondence of intendant of Provence to Colbert, 1679-81.
- 518. Correspondence of the intendant of Tours to Colbert, 1678-83.
- 551. Called *lettres communes*; these are letters sent to the *contrôleur-général* by private individuals, nonofficial groups, and so forth, 1681-83.
- 635. Placets and requests sent to *contrôleur-général*, 1683-84.
- 694. Propositions and other documents submitted to *contrôleur-général* by officials and individuals, 1672-91, mostly financial.
- 1143. Reports on financial, tax, and commercial surveys, 1680-90.
- 1491. Account of financial results of the farming of the tax on *arts* and *métiers* and other *affaires extraordinaires*, 1673-1700.
- 1495. Contracts, prices, and amounts realized on the farming of various taxes, 1685-1704.
- 1633. Accounts of wheat bought by the king for the Swiss and the poor of Paris, 1694.
- 1637. Accounts of sale of grain bought abroad for king, 1698-1700.
- 1684. Documents concerning French commerce in the Levant, 1679-80; also some extraneous eighteenth century correspondence.
- 1685. Documents on commerce and manufactures, 1685-99. It includes a very important report on the state of manufactures in 1693.
- 1893. Various documents, including extracts of reports of intendants, sent to Colbert, 1678-83.

## 7. K

- 118<sup>A</sup>. *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents, 1649-59.
- 118<sup>B</sup>. *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents, 1653-67. This carton contains originals of the tariffs of 1664 and 1667.
- 119<sup>A</sup>. *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents, 1664-75.
- 119<sup>B</sup>. *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents, 1675-81.
- 120<sup>A</sup>. *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents, 1664-74.
- 122. (One carton) *Cartons des rois: mélange* of official documents,
- 35. 1610-1714.

## 8. KK

- 1340. Deliberations of the six *corps* of merchants of the city of Paris, 1620-1706,

9. O<sup>1</sup>

2037. Documents on the manufacture of tapestries at Beauvais, 1664–1760.
- 2040<sup>A</sup>. Documents on the Gobelins, and a few on the Savonnerie, and on other manufactures, 1659–95.
2055. Documents on the manufacture of the Savonnerie, 1609–1764.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE IN PARIS

### 1. "Collection Baluze"

- 95. Poems (several on Colbert) and a *mélange* of seventeenth-century documents.
- 182. *Mélange* of documents on the history of France in the seventeenth century.
- 216. Documents of Mazarin and Colbert.
- 379. *Mélange* of a wide variety of manuscripts.

### 2. "Collection Clairambault"

Numbers 312-458 are a collection of a wide variety of documents, gathered to aid Bossuet in his instruction of the dauphin. They are arranged more or less chronologically.

- 360. Varied documents, 1600-5.
- 361. Varied documents, 1605-10.
- 378. Varied documents, 1621-25.
- 379. Varied documents, 1626-29.
- 446. Varied documents, 1668-70.
- 448. Varied documents, 1675-85.
- 461. Register of dispatches of Colbert to the intendants, January to June, 1679.
- 462. Register of dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, July to December, 1679.
- 463. Register of dispatches of Colbert to the intendants, 1680.
- 464. Dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, January to June, 1681.
- 465. Dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, July to December, 1681.
- 466. Dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, January to June, 1682.
- 467. Dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, July to December, 1682.
- 468. Dispatches from Colbert to the intendants, January to September, 1683.

- 486. *Mémoires*, probably by the marquis de la Fare, on the events and personages of the reign of Louis XIV [also available in published form].
- 499. Documents on Canada, the Indies, and a variety of other topics, 1600-1729.
- 532. Wide variety of documents on commerce and other topics, 1455-1734. Some good material on the subscriptions to the stock of the East India Company.
- 791-97. Papers of Colbert: letters, printed documents, material on taxes, administration, and finances, *mémoires* sent to him, and so forth, 1663-81.
- 825. Documents concerning the admirals of France.
- 827. Documents on various state offices, including that of superintendent of buildings, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 828. Documents on certain royal jurisdictions, including privileged merchants, artisans, and so forth.
- 867. Documents on the marine, commerce, and colonies, 1663-99.

### 3. "Cinq Cents de Colbert"

- 4. Great variety of official documents, fourteenth to seventeenth centuries.
- 196. *Traité des monnoys*, by Nicolas Pinette.
- 197. Documents and *mémoires* on mints, finances, and pawnshops, in the seventeenth century.
- 199. Inventory of all ships in French ports, 1664.
- 201. Report to Colbert by Sieur Arnoul on trip to England and Holland, 1670.
- 203. Varied *mémoires* on the marine and on commerce, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 204. Register of Colbert's dispatches concerning commerce, 1669.
- 206. *Mémoires* on commerce and canals, period of Colbert.
- 207. Documents on commerce, manufactures, and forests, 1664-69 (very important for privileged manufactures).
- 254. Regulations on the administration of Paris and of France, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 425. Report to the king by Charles Colbert, on his work in Alsace, 1656-63.
- 483. Documents on commerce, especially that with the Levant and America, seventeenth century.



## 4. "Collection Joly de Fleury"

1220. Manuscript history of the *Hôpital général* of Paris, dating from the eighteenth century, probably about 1740.
1237. Varied documents on the *hôpitaux généraux*.
1250. Documents on the *hôpitaux généraux* in the provinces, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

## 5. "Collection de Lorraine"

461. Documents on *arts et métiers* of Lorraine, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

## 6. "Manuscripts français"

- 2,085. A very interesting treatise on the foreign commerce of France, dating from 1553-55, by a royal official. This is only part of a larger work; the other volumes apparently have been lost. "Manuscripts français" 2086 is a less ornate copy of the same part of the same work.
- 4,303. Letters from Nicolas Foucault, intendant of Montauban, to Colbert, Louvois, and Seignelay, 1678-80.
- 4,780. Documents on the domain, finances, and commerce, under Henry IV and Louis XIII.
- 4,826. Documents on commerce and navigation, from the first half of the seventeenth century.
- 4,870. Documents on commerce, the marine, and so forth, early seventeenth century.
- 4,925. *Mémoires* on navigation, commerce, and colonies, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 5,459. *Mémoires* of the intendants on the various generalities, 1698.
- 5,581. Documents on the colonies and the marine, 1643-1769.
- 6,104. *Mémoire* of 1664, giving advice on policies for the East India Company.
- 8,025. Collection of documents, mostly by Colbert and Seignelay, on the marine, colonies, and so forth; many autograph letters and notes. Correspondence between Seignelay and Colbert.
- 8,039. Collection of documents on business and foreign trade, 1671-1710.
- 8,126. Documents on wine and wine trade, thirteenth to seventeenth centuries.

- 8,751- Letters of Colbert to Louis le Blanc, intendant of Rouen, 1675-  
8,752. 81.
- 8,758; Administrative acts of Louis le Blanc, intendant of Rouen, for  
8,760; years 1674-78.  
8,761 *bis*.
- 11,315. Correspondence of Patoulet, intendant of the West Indies and  
later of the marine; and documents on the marine and colonies  
in the seventeenth century.
- 13,516. Collection of pieces on the history of Canada, mostly from the  
seventeenth century.
- 14,115. Documents on the Gobelins, Savonnerie, marble, and mirrors, in  
the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 14,294. Documents and *mémoires* on commerce, from the early eighteenth  
century.
- 16,164. Documents on the relations of France with the Levant and North  
Africa in the first half of the seventeenth century.
- 16,736. *Mémoires* and documents on commerce, from the late seventeenth  
and early eighteenth centuries.
- 16,737. Documents on commerce, and especially on the East India Com-  
pany, from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
- 16,738. Documents on commerce and industry, from the first two-thirds  
of the seventeenth century.
- 16,739. Documents on commerce and industry, regulation of manufac-  
tures, guilds; sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 16,740. Documents on commerce and industry, canals, silk culture,  
Laffemas' commission of commerce, and so forth; first two-thirds  
of the seventeenth century.
- 16,741. Documents on trade, industry, medicine, grain, postal service,  
and inland waters; first half of the seventeenth century.
- 16,744. Documents on the administration of cities (especially Paris) and  
rural areas—markets, workers, vagabonds, streets, water, pests;  
mid-seventeenth century.
- 16,747. Documents on internal administration, especially of Paris, on  
luxury, and so forth; mid-seventeenth century.
- 16,764. *Mémoires* on provinces, by intendants, 1698.
- 17,329. Documents on commerce, trade, companies, admiralty, whale  
fisheries, and so forth; late sixteenth and early seventeenth  
centuries.

- 17,540. Collection of documents on finances, police, the idle poor, crippled soldiers, and so forth; first half of the seventeenth century.
- 18,240. Collection of documents on commerce, industry, finances, the domain, and forests; late sixteenth century and first half of the seventeenth century.
- 18,591. Documents on commerce and the marine, from the middle of the seventeenth century.
- 18,592. Documents on commerce and the marine, from the first two-thirds of the seventeenth century.
- 18,593. Documents on commerce, especially that with the Levant, the West Indies, and Canada, from the first half of the seventeenth century.
- 18,599. Collection of documents on hospitals, commerce, industry, canals, and so forth, sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.
- 18,600. Collection of documents on luxury, royal marriages, manufactures, duels, prisons, and so forth, first half of the seventeenth century.
- 18,605. Collection of documents on the relief of the poor of Paris, seventeenth century.
- 18,607. Documents on the relief of the poor of Paris in the seventeenth century.
- 18,615. Documents on administration, early seventeenth century.
- 21,733. "Collection de la Mare," documents on industry and manufactures, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.
- 21,773. "Collection de la Mare," documents on commerce in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- 21,778. "Collection de la Mare," documents on commerce, the East and West Indies, prohibited fabrics, and so forth, last half of the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century.
- 21,780. "Collection de la Mare," documents on *toiles peintes* and Indies fabrics, late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century.
- 21,785. "Collection de la Mare," documents on manufactures, especially woollens; late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century.
- 21,786. "Collection de la Mare," documents on textiles, tapestries, and foreign cloths; last half of the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century.
- 21,787. "Collection de la Mare," documents on manufactures, especially cloth of gold, cloth of silver, silks, and stockings; last half of the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century.

- 21,788. "Collection de la Mare," documents on manufacture and regulation of linens and laces, last half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century.
- 21,789. "Collection de la Mare," documents on mines, metals, and metal manufactures, last half of the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century.
- 21,790. "Collection de la Mare," documents on copper, leather, tar, soap, and starch industries, and so forth; last half of the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century.
- 21,791. "Collection de la Mare," documents on guilds, arts and crafts, thirteenth to eighteenth centuries.
- 21,807. "Collection de la Mare," documents on arts and crafts, artisans of Louvre, barbers, and so forth, fourteenth to eighteenth centuries.
- 23,022. Treatise on foreign commerce, especially that of Dutch and English, 1694.
7. "Manuscrits français, Nouvelles Acquisitions françaises"
- 5247-5249. Letters of Pontchartrain to La Reynie, 1689-97.
9318. "*Collection Margry*," documents on colonies and commerce in the first half of the seventeenth century.
9328. "*Collection Margry*," documents on emigration to the colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
9342. "*Collection Margry*," documents on the Île de Bourbon and Madagascar.
9387. "*Collection Margry*," documents on the East India trade and the East India companies in the seventeenth century.

#### 8. "Mélanges de Colbert"

34. Documents (many annotated by Colbert) on the treaty of commerce with England, The East India Company, and commercial law.
102. Letters to Colbert, January to June, 1661.
- 107 bis. Letters to Colbert, January to March, 1662.
108. Letters to Colbert, April to May, 1662.
- 109 bis. Letters to Colbert, July, 1662.
114. Letters to Colbert, January-February, 1663.
116. Letters to Colbert, June to August, 1663.

- 117. Letters to Colbert, September–October, 1663.
- 119. Letters to Colbert, January to March, 1664.
- 119 *bis*. Letters to Colbert, March, 1664.
- 120. Letters to Colbert, April, 1664.
- 121. Letters to Colbert, June, 1664.
- 122. Letters to Colbert, July, 1664.
- 123 *bis*. Letters to Colbert, August–September, 1664.
- 126. Letters to Colbert, December, 1664.
- 127. Letters to Colbert, January–February, 1665.
- 130. Letters to Colbert, July, 1665.
- 131. Letters to Colbert, August, 1665.
- 135. Letters to Colbert, January–March, 1666; varied documents, 1661–80. A number of notes, drafts, and so forth, in Colbert's hand.
- 139. Letters to Colbert, August, 1666.
- 142 *bis*. Letters to Colbert, December, 1666.
- 146. Letters to Colbert, November–December, 1667.
- 149. Letters to Colbert, October, December, 1668.
- 153. Letters to Colbert, June, 1669.
- 154. Letters to Colbert, July–December, 1669.
- 155. Letters to Colbert, January–December, 1670.
- 161. Letters to Colbert, August–September, 1672.
- 164. Letters to Colbert, May–June, 1673.
- 168 *bis*. Letters to Colbert, June–August, 1674.
- 171. Letters to Colbert, March–May, 1675.
- 171 *bis*. Letters to Colbert, February, 1675.
- 173. Letters to Colbert, January–July, 1676.
- 176. Letters and *mémoires* to Colbert, 1667–1670.

9. "Collection Morel de Thoisy"

- 79. Documents on horse-raising and other topics, period of Colbert.
- 318. Documents on the *hôpitaux*, especially in Paris, seventeenth century.
- 319. Documents on the *hôpitaux*, seventeenth century.
- 377. Variety of documents on commerce and manufactures in the seventeenth century.

## PRINTED SOURCE MATERIAL

Where more than one edition of the same work is given, that starred is the one used and cited.

Anonymous. *Advis au roy en l'occurrence des Estats Généraux*. 1614.

Anonymous. *Advis, remonstrances, et requestes aux Estats Généraux tenus à Paris*, 1614. Par six paysans.

Anonymous. *Discours sur les causes de l'extrême cherté qui est aujourd'huy en France et sur les moyens d'y remédier*. Paris, 1574. In *Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France*, Sér. I, Vol. VI, pp. 423-57.

Anonymous. *Traitté des finances de France, de l'institution d'icelles, de leurs sortes et espèces, de ce à quoy elles sont destinées, des moiens d'en faire fonds, de les bien employer, et d'en faire réserve au besoing*, 1580. In *Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France*, Sér. I, Vol. IX, pp. 341-99.

L'Assemblée des notables tenue à Paris ès années 1626 & 1627, et les résolutions prises sur plusieurs questions etc. Paris, 1652.

[? Barnaud, Nicolas.] *Le Cabinet du roy de France dans lequel il y a trois perles précieuses d'inestimable valeur: par le moyen desquelles sa majesté s'en va le premier monarque du monde & ses sujets du tout soulagez*. 1582.

Bertigny, Jonathas Petit de. *L'Anti-Hermaphrodite ou le secret, tant désiré de beaucoup, de l'advis proposé au roy pour réparer par un bel ordre, & légitime moyen aussi facilement, qu'insensiblement, tous les désordres, impietés, injustices, abus, meschancetez, & corruptions qui sont en ce royaume*. Paris, 1606.

Bodin, Jean. *Discours de Jean Bodin sur le rehaussement et diminution des monnoyes tant d'or que d'argent et le moyen d'y remédier, et responce aux paradoxes de M. de Malestroit*. Paris, 1599. There were earlier editions, viz., 1568, 1578.

——— *Les Six Livres de la république*. Paris, 1589. There were earlier editions.

Boisguilbert, Pierre le Pesant de. *Le Détail de la France*. 1695.

——— *Dissertation sur la nature des richesses de l'argent et des tributs où l'on découvre la fausse idée qui règne dans le monde à l'égard de ces trois articles*. Reprinted in *Economistes financières du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Ed. by E. Daire.

· *Factum de la France*. Reprinted in *Economistes financières du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Ed. by E. Daire.

——— *Traité de la nature, culture, commerce, et intérêt des grains tant par rapport au public qu'à toutes les conditions d'un état*. Reprinted in *Economistes financières du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Ed. by E. Daire.

- Boislisle, A. M. de. Correspondance des contrôleurs-généraux des finances avec les intendants des provinces, 1683-1715. 3 vols., Paris, 1874-97.
- Documents inédits sur Colbert. Nogent-le-Rotrou, 1874.
- (ed.) Mémoires des intendants sur l'état des généralités dressés pour l'instruction du duc de Bourgogne. Vol. I, Mémoire de la généralité de Paris. Paris, 1881. In Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France.
- Charpentier, François. Discours d'un fidèle sujet du roi touchant l'établissement d'une compagnie françoise pour le commerce des Indes orientales, adressé à tous les françois. Paris, 1664.
- Colbert, J. B. Lettres, instructions, et mémoires. Ed. by Pierre Clément. 7 vols. bound as 9, with another volume of errata and index, Paris, 1859-82.
- Crucé, Emeric. Le Nouveau Cynée, ou discours des occasions et moyens d'establir une paix générale & la liberté du commerce par tout le monde. Paris, 1623.
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- Le Débat des hérauts d'armes de France et d'Angleterre. Ed. by L. Pannier and P. Meyer. "Société des Anciens Textes Français." Paris, 1877.
- Depping, G. B. Correspondance administrative sous le règne de Louis XIV. 4 vols., Paris, 1850-55. In Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France, 1<sup>ère</sup> Sér., Histoire politique.
- Dollier de Casson. A History of Montreal, 1640-1672. Trans. and ed. by R. Flenley. London and Toronto, 1928.
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- Eon, Jean [in religion, Le père Mathias de Saint-Jean]. Le Commerce honorable. Nantes, 1646.
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- Forbonnais, Véron de. Recherches et considérations sur les finances de France depuis l'année 1595 jusqu'à l'année 1721. 2 vols., Basle, 1758.
- Fournier, Georges, S. J. Hydrographie, contenant la théorie et la pratique de toutes les parties de la navigation. Paris, 1643.
- Froumenteau, N. Le Secret des finances de France. 1581. Froumenteau is a pseudonym; the author was probably N. Barnaud.
- Garrault, François. Paradoxes sur le fait des monnoyes. Paris, 1578.
- Recueil des principaux advis donnez ès assemblées faictes par commandement du roy en l'Abbaye Saint-Germain-des-Prez, au mois d'aoust dernier, sur le contenu des mémoires, présentez à sa majesté estant en la ville de Poitiers, portans l'establissement du compte par escuz & suppression de celui par solz & livres. Paris, 1578.
- [Gentillet, I.] Discours sur les moyens de bien gouverner et maintenir en

- bonne paix un royaume ou autre principauté . . . contre Nicola Machiavel, Florentin. 1620.
- Gramont, Scipion de. *Le Denier royal. Traicté curieux de l'or et de l'argent.* Paris, 1629.
- Guiffrey, J. J. (ed.) *Comptes des bâtiments du roi sous le règne de Louis XIV.* 5 vols., Paris, 1881-1901. In *Collection des documents inédits sur l'histoire de France*, 3<sup>e</sup> Sér., Archéologie. Vol. I, on Colbert's period.
- Hauterive, Comte de, and Chevalier de Cussy. *Recueil des traités de commerce et de navigation de la France . . . depuis . . . 1648.* 10 vols., Paris, 1834-44.
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- Laffemas, B. de. *Advertissement et responce aux marchands et autres, où il est touché des changes, banquiers et banqueroutiers.* Paris, 1600.
- *Advertissement sur les divers crimes des banqueroutiers, suivant les édicts et ordonnances des roys de France.* Paris, 1609.
- *Avis et remonstrance à MM. les commissaires députez du roy au faict du commerce avec les moyens de soulager le peuple des tailles et autre bien nécessaire pour la police de royaume.* Paris, 1600.
- *Avis sur l'usage des passements d'or et d'argent.* Paris, 1610.
- *Comme l'on doit permettre la liberté du transport de l'or et de l'argent hors du royaume: et par tel moyen conserver le nostre et attirer celuy des estrangers.* Paris, 1602.
- *La Commission, édit et partie des mémoires de l'ordre et établissement du commerce général des manufactures en ce royaume.* Paris, 1601.
- \*Also in *Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France*, *Mélanges historiques*, IV, xiii-lxvi. Ed. by M. Champollion-Figeac.
- *Les Discours d'une liberté générale et vie heureuse pour le bien du peuple.* Paris, 1601.
- *Discours sur la figure du roy eslevée à la porte de la maison de ville.* 2d ed., Paris, 1607.
- \**La Façon de faire et semer la graine des meuriers, les eslever en pépinières, et les replanter aux champs: gouverner et nourrir les vers à soye au climat de la France, plus facilement que par les mémoires de tous ceux qui en ont escript.* Paris, 1604. Also in *Mémoires et documents sur la sériculture.* Montpellier, 1877.



Laffemas, B. de. L'Incrédulité ou l'ignorance de ceux qui ne veulent cognoistre le bien & repos de l'estat & veoir renaistre la vie heureuse des françois. Paris, 1600.

This work includes the following six pamphlets, published separately in the same year, and also issued in various combinations.

Premier Traicté, où est remonstré le mal que font les foires franches en ce royaume et comme ce royaume se rend tributaire de celui d'Angleterre à cause de leurs manufactures. Paris, 1600.

Second Traicté, advertissement et responce aux marchands & autres où il est touché des changes, banquiers & banqueroutiers. Paris, 1600.

Le Troiesme Traicté, les moyens de chasser la gueuserie, contraindre les fainéants & employer les pauvres. Desdiz à messieurs du clergé. Paris, 1600.

Le Quatriesme Advertissement du commerce fait sur le devoir de l'aumosne des pauvres, dédié aux riches & amateurs du bien public. Paris, 1600.

Le Cinquiesme Traicté du commerce parlant des procez & chicaneries, & voir l'honneur que l'on doit porter aux juges de la justice, avec la faute & la création de celle des consuls, & autre telles préjudiciables au public. Paris, 1600.

Le Sixiesme Traicté du commerce, sur l'abus de la cherté des vivres & denrées: parlant d'aucuns maires & eschevins, fermiers tant du vin que du sel, douanes, gabelles, & voyers des villes. Paris, 1600.

——— Instructions de plantage des meuriers pour messieurs du clergé avec les figures pour apprendre à nourrir les vers, faire et tirer les soyes. Paris, 1605.

——— Lettres et exemples de la feu royne mère, comme elle faisoit travailler aux manufactures, et fournissoit aux ouvriers de ses propres deniers. Avec la preuve certaine de faire les soyes en ce royaume: pour la provision d'iceluy, et en peu d'années, en fournir aux estrangers. Paris, 1602. \*Also in Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France, Sér. I, IX, 121-36.

——— Le Mérite du travail et labeur, dédié aux chefs de la police. Paris, 1602.

——— Le Naturel et Profit admirable du meurier. Paris, 1604.

——— Neuf Advertissements pour servir à l'utilité publique advenus sur le bonheur de la naissance de Monseigneur le Dauphin. Assavoir est d'un bon et rare ouvrier françois: faire fil d'or au tiltre de Milan; faire croistre le ris en France, bluter les farines par des enfans; faire fromage à la vraye mode de Milan; faire croistre esperges grosses de deux poulces et longues d'un grand pied; comme les estrangers possèdent la navigation de la mer et les richesses des foires; certain advis de fabriquer toutes étoffes en France; etc. Paris, 1601.

——— Le Plaisir de la noblesse et autres qui ont des éritages aux champs, sur la preuve certaine et profit des estouffes et soyes qui se font à Paris, Orléans, Tours, et Lyon pour l'année 1603. Paris, 1603.

- Laffemas, B. de. *Preuve du plant et profit des meuriers pour les paroisses des généralitez de Paris, Orléans, Tours, et Lyon pour l'année 1603*. Paris, 1603.
- *Recueil présenté au roy de ce qui se passe en l'assemblée du commerce au palais à Paris*. Paris, 1604. Also in *Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France*, Sér. I, Vol. XIV, pp. 219–45. \*Also in *Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France*, *Mélanges historiques*, IV, 284–301. Ed. by M. Champollion-Figeac.
- *Reiglement général pour dresser les manufactures et ouvrages en ce royaume et couper le cours des draps de soye et autres marchandises qui perdent et ruynent l'état*. Rouen, 1597.
- *Reiglement général pour dresser les manufactures en ce royaume et couper le cours des draps de soye et autres marchandises qui perdent et ruynent l'état*. Avec l'extraict de l'advis qui MM. de l'assemblée tenue à Rouen ont baillé à S. M. que l'entrée de toutes sortes de . . . marchandises de soyes et laines manufacturées hors ce royaume soient deffendues en iceluy. . . . Ensemble le moyen de faire les soyes par toute la France. Paris, 1597. This is a reprint of the preceding work, with the addition of a supplement of fourteen pages, numbered separately, at the end.
- *Remonstrance au peuple suivant les édicts et ordonnances des roys, à cause du luxe et superfluité des soyes, clinquants en habits, ruine générale*. Paris, 1601.
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